



THE · RED · HOT DOLLAR

AND · OTHER · STORIES · FROM

THE · BLACK · CAT

H. D. UMBSTAETTER

INTRODUCTION

BY

JACK LONDON

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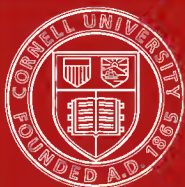
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THE RED - HOT DOLLAR

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AND OTHER STORIES FROM
THE BLACK CAT

By
H. D. UMBSTAETTER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
JACK LONDON



L. C. PAGE & COMPANY
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TO



Introduction

It is indeed a pleasure to write an introduction for a collection of tales by Mr. H. D. Umbstaetter. His stories are "Black Cat" stories, and by such designation is meant much. The field of the "Black Cat" is unique, and a "Black Cat" story is a story apart from all other short stories. While Mr. Umbstaetter may not have originated such a type of story, he made such a type possible, and made many a writer possible. I know he made me possible. He saved my literary life, if he did not save my literal life. And I think he was guilty of this second crime, too.

For months, without the smallest particle of experience, I had been attempting to write something market-

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able. Everything I possessed was in pawn, and I did not have enough to eat. I was sick, mentally and physically, from lack of nourishment. I had once read in a Sunday supplement that the minimum rate paid by the magazines was ten dollars per thousand words. But during all the months devoted to storming the magazine field, I had received back only manuscripts. Still I believed implicitly what I had read in the Sunday supplement.

As I say, I was at the end of my tether, beaten out, starved, ready to go back to coal-shoveling or ahead to suicide. Being very sick in mind and body, the chance was in favor of my self-destruction. And then, one morning, I received a short, thin letter from a magazine. This magazine had a national reputation. It had been founded by Bret Harte. It sold for twenty-five cents a copy. It held a four-thousand-

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word story of mine, "To the Man on Trail." I was modest. As I tore the envelope across the end, I expected to find a check for no more than forty dollars. Instead, I was coldly informed (by the Assistant Sub-scissors, I imagine), that my story was "available" and that on publication I would be paid for it the sum of five dollars.

The end was in sight. The Sunday supplement had lied. I was finished—finished as only a very young, very sick, and very hungry young man could be. I planned—I was too miserable to plan anything save that I would never write again. And then, that same day, that very afternoon, the mail brought a short, thin letter from Mr. Umbstaetter of the "Black Cat." He told me that the four-thousand-word story submitted to him was more lengthy than strengthly, but that if I would give permission to cut it in half, he would im-

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mediately send me a check for forty dollars.

Give permission! It was equivalent to twenty dollars per thousand, or double the minimum rate. Give permission! I told Mr. Umbstaetter he could cut it down two-halves if he'd only send the money along. He did, by return mail. And that is just precisely how and why I stayed by the writing game. Literally, and literarily, I was saved by the "Black Cat" short story.

To many a writer with a national reputation, the "Black Cat" has been the stepping stone. The marvelous, unthinkable thing Mr. Umbstaetter did, was to judge a story on its merits and *to pay for it on its merits*. Also, and only a hungry writer can appreciate it, he paid immediately on acceptance.

Of the stories in this volume, let them speak for themselves. They are true

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“Black Cat ” stories. Personally, I care far more for men than for the best stories ever hatched. Wherefore, this introduction has been devoted to Mr. Umbstaetter, the Man.

JACK LONDON.

GLEN ELLEN, CALIFORNIA,
March 25, 1911

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THE RED - HOT DOLLAR

THE RED-HOT DOLLAR

IT lacked three minutes of five by the big clock in the tower when the east-bound Chicago express rumbled into the station at Buffalo. The train had not yet come to a standstill when a hatless man jumped from the platform of the rear sleeping-car and ran across the tracks into the depot restaurant. A few minutes later he reappeared, carrying a cup of coffee in one hand and a small paper bag in the other.

With these he hurriedly made his way back to the car through a straggling procession of drowsy tourists,

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who were taking advantage of the train's five minutes' stop to breathe the crisp morning air. The last of these had already resumed his seat when the man without a hat again appeared at the lunch counter, returned the borrowed dishes, and ordered coffee for himself. He had just picked up the cup and was raising it to his lips when the conductor's "All aboard" rang through the station.

Leaving the coffee untouched, he thrust a five-dollar bill at the attendant, grabbed his change, and started in pursuit of the moving train. He had almost reached it when an unlucky stumble sent the coins in his hand rolling in all directions along the floor. Quickly recovering himself and paying no heed to his loss, he redoubled his efforts, and, though losing ground at every step, kept up the hopeless chase to the end of the station. There he

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stopped, panting for breath. The slip had proved fatal. He had missed the train!

As he stood staring wildly through the clouds of dust that rose from the track, a young woman, evidently deeply agitated, suddenly appeared in the doorway of the vanishing car. Upon seeing him, she made frantic attempts to leap from the platform, when she was seized by a man and pulled back into the car. When the door had closed upon the two the bareheaded man in the station faced about and philosophically muttered: —

“ It’s fate! ”

Then, after pausing a few moments, as if to collect his thoughts, he slowly retraced his steps to the scene of his mishap and began calmly searching for his lost change. Circling closely about, his eyes scanning the floor, he succeeded in recovering first one and then

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another of the missing coins, until finally, after repeated rounds, he lacked only one dollar of the whole amount. At this point he paused, clinked the recovered coins in his hand, looked at his watch, and then started on a final round. As this failed to reveal the missing piece, he gave up the search, transferred the contents of his hands to his trousers' pocket, and started in the direction of the telegraph office.

He had proceeded perhaps twenty paces when it occurred to him to turn about and cast one more look along the floor. As he did so his eye fell upon a shining object lodged in an opening between the rail and planked floor, a few feet from where he stood. He stooped to examine it, and, seeing that it was the missing coin, reached for it, but found the opening too narrow to admit his fingers. He tried to recover

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the piece with his pocket-knife, and, failing in this attempt, took his lead-pencil, with which, after repeated attempts, he succeeded in tossing it upon the floor.

With an air of subdued satisfaction, he walked away, and was about to convey the coin to his pocket when a sudden impulse led him to examine it. Holding it up before his eyes, he stopped, scrutinized every detail, and as he turned it over and over the puzzled look on his face changed to one of rigid astonishment. For fully a minute he stood as if transfixed; then, rousing himself and looking anxiously about as if to see if any one had observed him, he hurried to the cashier's desk in the restaurant, and, producing the bright silver dollar, asked the girl if she happened to remember from whom she received it.

She didn't remember, but would ex-

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change it for another, she said, if he wished. Politely declining the offer and apologizing for having troubled her, he said that, as the coin he held in his hand was separating a loving wife from her husband, he wished very much to find some trace of its former owner. The girl looked up, thought for a moment, then, pulling out the cash drawer, and examining its contents, said she might have received it from the conductor of the Lake Shore express which had left for Cleveland at 3.15. She now recalled that when she came on duty at midnight there was no silver dollar among the change in the cash drawer, and that the only one she remembered receiving was from Sleeping-Car Conductor Parkins.

The man thanked her and hastened to the telegraph office, where he sent this message: —

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“ Conductor, East Bound Chicago Express, Utica, N. Y.

“ Please ask lady in section seven of sleeping-car Catawba to await her husband at Delavan House, Albany.

“ A. J. Hobart.”

After requesting the operator to kindly rush the despatch, he proceeded to the ticket office, procured a seat in the 5.45 fast mail for Cleveland, and, with his hand clutching the coin in his pocket and his eyes fixed upon the floor, meditatively paced up and down the platform, waiting for the train to arrive.

As he did so he was disconcerted to find himself the object of wide-spread curiosity; even the newsboys with the morning papers favored him with an inquiring stare as they passed. Wondering what was amiss, he suddenly put his hand to his head, which furnished

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an instant explanation. He was hatless.

Looking at the big clock, he saw that it lacked ten minutes of train time, and, hastily crossing over to the farther track, he disappeared through the west end of the station.

Among the passengers who boarded the 5.45 fast mail for Cleveland when it thundered into the station, ten minutes later, was the bareheaded gentleman of a few minutes ago, now wearing a stylish derby. Once in the train, he settled himself in his seat with a sigh of relief and satisfaction. Not until then did the really remarkable character of the situation dawn upon him. On the very day which he had hailed as one of the happiest of his life he was traveling at the rate of about sixty miles an hour away from the girl he loved devotedly and to whom he had been married just seventeen hours.

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A queer opening of his honeymoon! In his anxiety to get a cup of coffee for his wife, he had lost his hat, then lost his change, and, lastly, lost the train.

Why did he not follow his bride at once? What mysterious spell had come upon this seventeen-hour bridegroom that he should fly from her as swiftly as the fast express could carry him? His hand held the solution of the problem — simple, yet unexplainable — a silver dollar! It held the secret he must unravel before he could return to her; it was not then that he loved her less, but that this bit of precious metal had suddenly developed an occult power that had turned their paths, for the present, in opposite directions.

At the first stopping place he sent another message, which read as follows: —

The Red Hot Dollar

“ Mrs. A. J. Hobart, Delavan House,
Albany, N. Y.

“ Cannot possibly reach Albany before to-morrow morning.

“ Ansel.”

With his brain filled with excited thoughts, the young man entered the sleeping-car office at Cleveland four hours later and asked for Conductor Parkins. He was told that this official would not be on duty before night, though possibly he might be at his home on St. Clair Street.

To the address given him the indefatigable young man repaired at once, and found the genial gentleman for whom he sought breakfasting with his family. He kindly gave audience at once to his visitor.

“ This coin, which you gave the cashier of the restaurant in Buffalo,” said the latter, revealing it in the palm

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of his hand; "can you tell me from whom you received it?"

Parkins remembered receiving cash from but two passengers the night before, one a traveling man who got off in Cleveland, and the other a woman whose destination was Erie. The stranger might ascertain their names by consulting the car diagram at the ticket office. "You seem interested in the coin," he added, smiling.

"I am, for a good reason," laughed the young man in reply. "It is separating a man from his wife." And with these enigmatical words he made his adieu, with thanks, hastened to the ticket office, and an hour later was scouring the city for one Richard Spears.

The register of the Stillman House contained the freshly written name of "Richard Spears, Providence, R. I.," but that gentleman, when found in his

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room showing samples of hardware to a prospective buyer, regretted that he could not throw any light on the particular dollar his visitor held up to his gaze, and remembered distinctly that he had given the conductor a two-dollar bill in payment for his berth. He came from a section, he said, where people took no stock in silver dollars.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when a man got off the train at Erie and inquired of the cabmen and depot master regarding a lady who had arrived on the early train from Buffalo. An hour later he was driving along a country road some miles south of the town inquiring for the Wickliffe farm.

As he finally drove up to the house which was his destination he was conscious of a strange excitement. This, he realized, was probably his only remaining chance to trace the coin by whose mysterious power he had been

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drawn into this wild chase with the hope of identifying its former owner. He took a hasty note of the general features of the place. It had a comfortable, well-to-do look; a two-story house, white, with green blinds. Most of these were closed, as is customary with country houses, but the windows at the right of the big front door, opening on a small porch, were shaded only by white curtains. There was a sound of voices within as he stepped up to the door and rapped.

Mrs. Wickliffe, a pleasant-faced little woman, sat surrounded by three children and a neighbor's wife, to whom she was displaying some purchases. As one of the children opened the door, admitting the stranger into this animated scene, she was standing before a mirror trying on a new bonnet, which was eliciting extravagant praises from the neighbor.

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After listening to his story, Mrs. Wickliffe said that her memory was so treacherous that she really couldn't say for certain whether or not she gave the conductor the shining dollar, but that if she did she must have received it from her son in Germantown, Pa., from a visit to whose house she had just returned, and who before her departure had exchanged some money for her. She added that, as she took no interest in coin collecting, a dollar was simply a dollar to her and that she thought a woman was very foolish to take up with a fad which might ruin her happiness.

Her unknown caller thought so, too, admired her taste in millinery, took the address of her son, and, clutching the fatal coin more firmly than ever, drove back to Erie, where he boarded the New York night express.

To the young man who still clutched

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the silver dollar sleep was impossible. A multitude of exciting fancies crossed his brain. The developments he hoped to bring about, the curious solution of the problem, its effect upon his future, and the future of one so dear to him, — all this murdered sleep for him as effectually as did the crime on Lady Macbeth's soul. It drove him into the smoking-car, where he sank into a seat and planned and conjectured between puffs of Havana smoke until the train reached Albany. So completely absorbed had he become in the solution of this knotty problem in which his accident of the morning had involved him, and so convinced was he that the information must be for the time kept a secret, that he actually began to dread what was clearly inevitable, — the explanation he must shortly make to his wife.

His inclination was to tell her all.

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His duty to others forbade this. After pondering over the matter, he decided to explain that he had a happy surprise in store for her, one that had an important bearing on their future, and which unfortunately necessitated a change in their plans for a honeymoon in Europe.

This, on reaching the Delavan House, he expressed to a very pretty and very anxious little woman who was awaiting him, together with a good many other things not necessary to this story. And, instead of the steamer for Europe, the reunited pair took a train for Philadelphia. Early the next day the young man presented himself at the office of Dr. James Wickliffe, at Germantown, who smilingly admitted having given the shining dollar to his mother two days before. He had received the coin from a patient, a letter-carrier named John Lennon, and remembered it be-

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cause of the following strange story, related to him by Lennon himself.

A few days before, the carrier was engaged in delivering mail from door to door along Vine Street, Philadelphia, when a zigzag trip across the street and back again brought him to the narrow stairway of a dingy brick house, in front of which hung an enormous brass key bearing the word "Locksmith." Here he paused to draw a little parcel from his bundle. As he did so he heard something fall with a metallic clink upon the stone pavement. He looked and saw that it was a silver dollar, which rolled toward the gutter and came to a stop close by the curb. Hastening to pick it up, he instantly dropped it with a cry of pain.

The coin was almost red hot!

The letter-carrier stood nursing his hand and thinking for two or three minutes. Silver dollars do not commonly

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drop out of the sky. But that this one should thus fall like a meteorite in a condition too heated for handling was certainly more than surprising — it was astounding! The man looked up at the dingy brick house and examined it attentively, noting that the ground floor was occupied as a green grocery and that all of the windows were shut save one in the third story.

Then he kicked the mysterious coin into a puddle, fished it out again with his fingers, and put it into his trousers' pocket. He was about to investigate further, when some small boys called his attention to the fact that it was the first day of April, whereupon he proceeded on his way. He gave no further thought to the matter until that night, when he found that his thumb and forefinger had been so badly burned as to require treatment.

The next morning he called upon the

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doctor, who dressed the painful hand and received the mysterious coin in payment for his services.

That night, behind locked doors in one of the officers' rooms of the United States Mint in Chestnut Street, two men were engaged in a long whispered conference. The wife of one of the men, as she sat in her room in the Continental Hotel, anxiously waiting for her husband, was beginning to wonder whether, after all, marriage was a failure!

Two days later, in speaking of the seizure of over forty thousand bogus silver dollars and the clever capture of three of the most dangerous counterfeiters that ever attacked the currency of the United States, the *Daily News* said: —

“ The most remarkable part of the whole story is that one of the coins, fresh from the machine of one of the counterfeiters, fell out of a third-story

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window near which he was working, was picked up while almost red hot by a letter-carrier, and passed as genuine through various hands until it reached Buffalo, where, by the merest accident, it came into the possession of Mr. Ansel Hobart of the Secret Service. That gentleman noticed an imperfection at one point of its rim, and succeeded in tracing the coin to the headquarters of the gang on Vine Street in this city, where, under the cloak of a locksmith shop and green grocery business, six hundred of the spurious coins were turned out daily. So admirably were these counterfeits executed as to defy scrutiny save by experts of the Government. The coins were not cast in molds after the ordinary fashion, but were struck with a die, and plated so thickly with silver as to withstand tests by acids. The defect which led to the discovery was found only in the one coin

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already spoken of, and it is supposed that it was this defect that caused the piece to spring from the finishing machine and fall out of the window."

And the New York newspapers of three days later contained the intelligence that the White Star steamer "Majestic," which sailed for Liverpool that day, had among her passengers Mr. and Mrs. Ansel J. Hobart, of Chicago, Illinois.

THE UNTURNED TRUMP

The Unturned Tramp

THE ferry-boat, "Rappahannock," had an experience in the winter of 1873 that will never be forgotten by any of her passengers.

During one of her regular trips between New York and Brooklyn this boat suddenly quitted her respectable, though somewhat monotonous, career, and became a common tramp, without port or destination.

The day awoke in fog such as the oldest inhabitant had never seen. The East River was blocked with ice and soon became a shrieking bedlam of groping and bewildered craft, whose pilots could scarcely see their hands before their faces.

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At half past nine the "Rappahan-nock" left Brooklyn, well laden with passengers, and started on her customary trip almost directly across the river — a very short and usually easy voyage. Before even reaching the middle of the stream, however, the ice and fog had thrown her completely out of her course. Back and forth, up and down stream, the pilot vainly groped, amid the shrieking whistles, ringing of fog bells, and loud crash of ice boulders, until, in the confused clangor, he had entirely lost his bearings.

When, after long and perilous battling with ice jams and many hair-breadth escapes from collisions, he suddenly sighted the landing place on the New York side, he found it occupied by a sister boat, which had been driven there to avoid destruction. He backed out, only to be lost again, and for three hours this boat, now become a mere

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tramp, wandered aimlessly up and down the East River with its load of excited passengers, whose emotions ranged anywhere between the rage and impatience of the belated Wall Street speculator, to whom the delay might mean a loss of fifty thousand dollars, to the hysteria of a nervous little woman who had left her baby alone at home, and who begged the other helpless passengers for the love of Heaven to help her set her feet once more on land.

Between these two extremes of impatience and excitement was a small proportion of passengers who remained calm, even endeavoring to while away the time by exchanging pleasantries and making wagers as to the time of their deliverance. Among these was a group of men in the cabin who, after having read and re-read the morning papers, were casting about for

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some other method of killing time. One suggested a game of cards.

“Cards!” laughed one of his companions in misery. “Who’d carry cards on a ferry-boat? Who, outside of a lunatic asylum, would start on a ten minutes’ voyage provided with games to pass away the time?”

“Here is a euchre deck which is at your service.”

The speaker, evidently a globe-trotter, drew from under the bench a traveling-bag, so much worn and embellished by tags, labels, and hieroglyphics that it resembled some old veteran just returned from the wars and still covered with surgeons’ plasters. From this he produced a pack of cards and tendered it to the man who had suggested a game.

“Certainly, if you will join us; but what shall we do for a table?”

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“Here is a camp-stool,” said the man of the world. And in a moment four men were sitting around it, cutting for deal, which chanced to fall to the stranger.

The cards were distributed rapidly, and the dealer was about to turn the trump when a loud shriek pierced the air and a woman opposite suddenly sank fainting to the floor.

The tension among the passengers had become so great that a panic seemed imminent.

“Don’t be alarmed, gentlemen; it is nothing serious,” said the dealer calmly. “The lady simply caught sight of her own frightened face in the mirror, and the shock caused her to faint. It reminds me of a thrilling experience an American traveler had while bumping through Syria. But, pardon me, the game!”

Once more he made a movement to

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turn the trump, when one of the party exclaimed: —

“There can’t be a better time or place than this for telling a thrilling experience.”

“Yes,” said another; “do give us some other kind of bumping than we are having here. Let’s have the story before we begin the game.”

The stranger leaned back, passed his cigar case, and, having lighted one himself, began: —

“It is an unwritten law among the wild Bedouins east of the Red Sea that if an infidel traveler is attended on his journey by one of the faithful he is safe from the attacks of Mohammedan robbers. As long as the ‘Frank,’ as all foreigners are called, is under the protection of the Star and Crescent, the rascal’s hand is stayed, and as they meet, the villain, who would otherwise show no quarter, salutes with the grave

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suavity of a courtier. But let that same traveler become separated from the Arab guard that he has bribed to give him safe conduct through his own bandit-infested country, and he becomes legitimate prey. He will be plundered and perhaps killed, or, worse, if the robber thinks that cruelty will extort any secrets of hidden spoil, tortured or held for ransom, with each day's delay losing a few fingers, which are forwarded to the captive's friends to signify that the rascals mean business.

“ The party in which this American was traveling had been entering Syria from the south, and were progressed some twelve days from the sacred base of old Sinai. At a place called Bir-es-Sheba, on the regular caravan route to and from Mecca from the north, they heard of some interesting archeological treasures just unearthed some two

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days' journey to the east, and, having made the detour, the party snugly encamped by the side of a beautiful stream under the shadow of the Tubal chain of mountains.

“ The treasures were vastly exaggerated, as is the custom with everything Oriental, and they soon determined to turn back to the caravan route and ‘ bump ’ on up into Syria — ‘ bumping ’ being the familiar term for camel riding, and a very expressive word at that. But on the afternoon of the first resting-day some one suggested a jaunt to a famous old well, where it was said were some very ancient tumuli. But, knowing the Bedouins to be conscientious liars, and sick of this unrewarded chase for phantom treasures, the American begged to be left behind in charge of two tents, which were pitched side by side on the bank of the stream.

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“ This was at last agreed upon, the whole party except himself going off on their three days’ trip, leaving their comrade stretched at full length on a rug, his *narghili*, or water pipe, lighted for company.

“ This Oriental atmosphere, gentlemen, is a powerful drug. Do what you will to fight against it, its subtle charm holds you captive. The man succumbed to its influences and went fast asleep.

“ Out of this sweet, trance-like repose he suddenly bounded into the horrible consciousness of a torturing pain in one of his hands, as though some wild beast was crunching the bones. But, as he writhed to his knees to grapple with the foe, he saw instead three swarthy, evil-faced Bedouins bending over him with ghoulish glee. One had just cut off, with a hideous dirk-knife, the first three fingers of his left hand.

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In an instant it flashed upon him that these were to be sent to his friends with a demand for ransom. He was correct in this supposition, for no sooner had the bleeding hand been rudely bandaged than two of his captors set out upon this mission, leaving him in care of the third, who was heavily armed.

“No one knew better than the prisoner how impossible such a ransom would be. His fellow-travelers had brought as little money into Syria as would meet their actual necessities while there. He therefore began to cast desperately about in his mind for a loophole of escape before the fellows should return with these unsatisfactory tidings, which would result, no doubt, in further mutilations.

“As his gaze swept the tent for something suggesting a plan for deliverance, he saw it had been gutted of everything except two articles, — his

The Unturned Trump

light silk coat, which hung upon the partition between the two tents, and the tourist's shaving mirror which it concealed. The coat had been overlooked because it was as grimy as the tent wall itself.

“ In moments like this one grasps at straws. As it is said a drowning person reviews his past experiences perfectly in a brief moment, so to this man, facing desperate odds, came a desperate suggestion.

“ He called loudly on a supposed protector in the adjoining tent to come to the ‘ window,’ and prove to his captor that he was under protection of a Moslem. As he spoke he slowly drew the coat from before the mirror in front of which the sheik was standing.

“ No words can express the unutterable consternation pictured upon that blazing face, livid with fright and wonder, as for the first time it saw its own

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awful reflection, not knowing it was its own. One instant he stood stock-still, fascinated, horrified, overwhelmed; then collapsed, just as that lady did but a moment ago, and the American quickly possessed himself of his captor's arms and was master of the situation.

“And now, gentlemen,” concluded the story teller, “we will have our game.”

As he spoke he again reached forward to turn the trump. There was a quickly drawn breath of horror from those who observed him, for the first three fingers of his left hand were missing.

Before he could turn the card, a savage lurch of the boat, accompanied by the creaking of timbers, announced the arrival of the “Rappahannock” at her New York slip — and the trump was never turned.

THE REAL THING

The Real Thing

JUST before midnight on the ninth day of December in the year 1881, Malcolm Joyce, of New Haven, made the acquaintance of the real thing. Prior to that time he had been a sceptic. At the time of his startling experience, he was in San Francisco, visiting friends whose home was charmingly situated near the summit of Nob Hill, that conspicuous eminence on California Street, once the scene of "sand-lot" riots, and famous for its palaces of millionaires.

Joyce, having spent the evening with his host at a theatre party and an hour at whist, had glanced over a packet of London papers, smoked a cigar, and turned off the light preparatory to go-

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ing to bed. He stepped to the large bay window of his chamber, to enjoy for a moment the impressive panorama spread below him in the sombre silence.

There before him, just across the bay, whose fantastically scattered lights of red and green serve as guiding stars to the mariner passing through the Golden Gate, lay Oakland, the beautiful city of sunny homes. To his left loomed up with awe-inspiring grandeur through the dim shadows the palatial residences of the immediate vicinity, each dark and silent in its solitary majesty. To the right, in the very shadow of this manifestation of Occidental millions, and but a block distant, lay acres of dismal roofs, sheltering never-ending scenes of Oriental contrast — Chinatown — with its fifty thousand souls, its underground opium joints and gambling hells, its temples

The Real Thing

of wealth and piety and dens of vice and penury.

As Joyce turned from the contemplation of the strange contrast presented by the scene, the silence of which was broken only by the ceaseless buzz of the invisible cables in the street below, he was startled by the signal gongs of two cable cars which passed each other directly in front of the house. Almost unconsciously he returned to his position at the window and paused to watch the one disappear over the summit, while the other as speedily descended the long, steep hill, so steep that its pavement, never trodden by horses' hoofs, is grass-grown in the crevices. He stood but a moment and then, realizing the lateness of the hour, turned abruptly to go to bed. As he did so, his eyes swept once more the hilltop just beyond.

Horror! Was he asleep? Did he

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dream? No. From the tower half-way down the hill came the first stroke of midnight, assuring him that he was awake. With an icy shudder, chained to the spot, he continued to gaze at a ghastly spectacle, clearly outlined upon the gloomy background by the light of the street lamp a block above.

He saw it moving — a human skeleton with uplifted arm and flowing shroud, all ghastly white, all too real to be mistaken, from the gleaming skull to the fluttering robe. He saw it approaching nearer and nearer — gliding swiftly and noiselessly through the air, above the middle of the street. He tried to move, but could not, — his eyes refused to leave the hideous sight. He saw it coming, closer and closer. It would pass below him, not a hundred feet away.

Determined that will and courage should conquer doubt and fear, sum-

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moning all his strength of nerve, he pressed closer to the window, so close that his face fairly touched the glass — and he saw a human skeleton soaring through the air.

Now, Malcolm Joyce was not easily frightened. No one had ever accused him of cowardice, and they who knew him readily believed his statement that he enjoyed solitude. Yet, as he stood there in the darkness, his eyes fixed upon the vanishing figure, he felt somehow that he should welcome company, particularly the company of another not easily frightened. So strong was this impression of the occasional disadvantage of solitude that without delay he relighted the gas and stepped before the mirror. The deathly pallor and agitation that confronted him was bewildering.

As he tried to calm himself and change the current of his thoughts he

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recalled the "spook test" of an old hunter whom he had met in New South Wales.

This test consisted in asking oneself three questions: "Are you awake, are you sober, are you sane?" By the time these queries are propounded and answered, the ghost on trial will have proved itself an illusion.

Without hesitation Joyce answered the first two questions — he was unquestionably awake and sober. But was he in his right mind? He picked up a paper and read for a moment, but failed to grasp a single idea! He turned the page. He could read, but he could not understand! He jumped up, dazed, frightened, trembling, perspiring. Was his mind giving way under the strain it had undergone? Once more he looked at the first page of the paper before him. It was "London Punch"! He was sane!

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Hardly had he satisfied himself of the success of his test, when the familiar signals of two passing cars again sounded in his ears. With the air of a man convinced that the cause of fear and suffering has been groundless, he lighted a fresh cigar, stepped briskly to the window, and, puffing slowly and regularly, calmly watched the course of the diverging cars. As the distance between them increased, he followed the one going down-hill until it had reached a point nearly two blocks distant, and then turned his attention to the summit over which the other had already disappeared.

As he sharply watched the critical spot his anxiety decreased as, after some moments, no signs of the unearthly sight appeared.

Of course, he reasoned, while the object he had beheld some ten or fifteen minutes before might never appear

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again, it still might have been a ghost. A sensation akin to doubt stole over him.

But, whether or not his eyes had, after all, played him a trick, he was now ready to go to bed.

He drew down the shade of the window to his left and had grasped the cord of the one directly before him, when his arm fell to his side as if paralyzed. With a loud whirr the suddenly released shade rushed upward, and there, not thirty yards in front of and below him, he beheld the shocking spectre gliding up-hill.

He stood in rigid horror, held by the grim monstrosity.

Inclining slightly forward as it soared past, with bony arm upstretched to heaven, its bleached death's head bare and shining, the snowy drapery enshrouding its skeleton form in a silent flutter, it presented to Joyce's

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view the most horribly revolting and yet fascinating spectacle he had ever beheld, and one that he never forgot. In the face of this further proof all his doubts vanished, and he felt absolutely certain that he had seen what is here described.

But, even before the frightful object had finally passed from his view, he experienced one of those sudden revulsions of feeling by which fear becomes courage, and anxiety is followed by mental calm, and thus reconciled to a new belief, he went to bed.

When he awoke on the following morning, he decided to say nothing to any one of his strange experience until he had taken counsel with an intimate bachelor friend, a lawyer. He felt relieved, therefore, to find the breakfast chat confined to topics entirely foreign to the spirit world. Evidently none of the family had been disturbed by

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ghostly visions. As he looked across the table into the eyes of a bewitching girl, he almost shuddered at the fleeting thought that the gruesome nocturnal sight he had seen might have been a warning — an omen of some dread calamity that might dash forever the hope he entertained with regard to her. It was to see her again — to be at her side and, if possible, to woo her for his own — that he was in San Francisco.

Two years previous they had first met, on the opposite coast of the continent. While ranging in the Maine woods, Joyce had climbed Mount Royce and Speckle Mountain and visited the tourmaline mines, and on one of his woodland tramps had come across a college student with one foot inextricably caught in a bear trap. Fortunately, a legging buckle and a stout branch of undergrowth, caught at the same time, had prevented the terrible

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teeth of the trap from crushing the bone, and the young fellow, a brother of Joyce's future idol, was promptly released, nearly exhausted from the shock of his adventure and the fatigue of his fruitless struggles to escape.

The gratitude of the rescued youth and his parents resulted in an invitation to Joyce to visit the family, which he accepted with much alacrity, after having seen the pretty daughter of the house.

Ten o'clock found Malcolm Joyce at the office of his friend, the lawyer. He had expected Lucien Nelson to be sceptical and full of good-natured pleasantry and was therefore prepared for the reception accorded his unusual tale. He paid no attention to his friend's intimation that he had seen the ghost while under spiritual influence, rejected a proposition for a writ of ejectment to be served upon it, and finally

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aroused Nelson's interest and secured the promise of his co-operation in an armed attempt, to be made that night, to investigate the ghastly mystery.

Accordingly, twelve hours later, the two young men, each with a revolver, were snugly ensconced in a dark corner of the bay window of Joyce's chamber on Nob Hill. For two hours Malcolm was obliged to endure all the thinly veiled ridicule, biting sarcasm and ironical humor that a friend alone dare utter, so that when he at length turned up the light for a moment to make sure of the time, he was glad to find that a few moments more would bring the hour of midnight — the traditional time for ghostly visitations.

The sudden appearance of the cable cars that passed each other on the hill at twelve served as a signal for another outbreak of raillery on the part of Nel-

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son, but Joyce, in no mood for further banter, kept his eyes upon the progress of the cars, searching the steep incline for the unearthly object which he hoped, yet dreaded, to behold. The downward car had not yet passed the cross-walk three blocks below, when, with a feeling of awe which he could not have described, mingled with a sort of lively satisfaction, he saw again the animated skeleton flash before his eyes. Emerging, apparently, from the very earth, in the rear and a little to the left of the departing car, it rose until its full length stood suspended in the air. Then, after a slight, wavering pause, it came gliding up the hill.

His experience of the previous night thus confirmed, he was able to control his voice and nerves as he said, coolly, to his companion, while dreading what the reply might be:

“Nelson, here’s a friend of yours

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coming up street; better step out and speak to him."

To his immense relief, the trembling voice of his friend exclaimed at his ear:

"Great God! A ghost for sure!"

Nelson's horrified tone and perceptible shudder left no doubt of his state of mind, and it was with much satisfaction that Joyce seized the opportunity to turn several of the lawyer's gibes against him.

Ignoring these sarcasms, Nelson exclaimed again, emphatically:

"That was a ghost, as sure as I live — and I should like to see more of him."

"He'll very likely be back in ten or fifteen minutes, same as last night."

"Well, then, let's tackle him, on his way down."

They shook hands, and neither spoke again until they had reached the side-

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walk, where, three blocks farther down, they concealed themselves in the deep shadows of a spacious doorway and awaited the expected return of the midnight visitant.

No one who has not had a similar experience can fully comprehend the thrill of suspense at such a time. He may have sought a human foe, in the open or in ambush, have stood guard at a solitary camp fire in the silent night, or passed a weary vigil in the jungle, prepared to meet any form of savage beast, but he is still a stranger to the sensation that comes to him who, in firm belief, awaits the coming of a midnight ghost.

As the passage of the cable cars on their trip next after midnight had heralded the return of the spectre on the previous night, Joyce warned his friend to be prepared for that event.

“After the car has gone and the

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coast is clear and quiet, go for it," he commanded.

"You bet!" was the answer, "and don't forget to be quick on the trigger."

At that instant a sharp tapping on a window, apparently a block above them, met their ears, and at the same time they saw the downward car mounting the hillside. As it approached, the noise increased to a loud rattle and then suddenly stopped. The car had no sooner passed and the hill become bare than the ghost appeared at the summit, gliding swiftly in mid-air, as on the previous occasions.

"There he comes!" the watchers exclaimed together, in excited whispers. "Remember now," whispered Nelson, "the moment he gets close enough we'll rush out, and when I say, 'Shoot!' you pump lead into that snowy skull, while I ladle some pellets between his

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ribs. Let him have it six times in succession. And don't forget, it's got to be all accidental, — we were frenzied with fear and shot in self-defence. Don't forget that, for we may have to swear to it."

By this time the skeleton was flying toward the block in which they were concealed.

"Now, then, rush for the middle of the street!"

They rushed, experiencing an awful moment, but when still within some feet of the apparition, a dark figure, armed with a long club, darted suddenly from a doorway on the opposite side of the street, and in another moment the spectre lay prostrate on the ground. Before the ghost hunters fully realized what had happened, they stood, breathless, behind the newcomer, as he, unconscious of their presence, stooped over his fallen quarry.

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“What are you doing here?” sternly demanded Nelson, grasping the ghost-destroyer by the arm. Starting at the touch, the latter sprang forward in a frantic attempt to escape, but finding himself hopelessly detained, he stood staring wildly at his captors. “Speak. What are you doing here?” repeated the lawyer.

“Him not my glost,” was the meek reply, in the trembling tones of a frightened Chinaman.

“Oh, very well. Pick him up and come with us; you are our prisoner.”

Without further words, the terrified Chinaman, carrying his prize, was placed between his captors and marched quickly to Kearney Street, near by, where, behind locked doors, the two friends proceeded to investigate an affair that had excited and agitated them as nothing had ever done before.

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Prostrate upon the floor, flat and motionless, their previously formidable foe was no longer impressive. True, the skull and skeleton arm, chalked to a ghastly whiteness, were still suggestive of horror, but when the drapery was lifted the anatomy disclosed was of such ludicrous simplicity and harmlessness that the astonishment of the inquisitors brought a faint smile even to the pale yellow face of the frightened heathen.

Briefly described, the plan and specifications of the ghost were as follows: A human skull was securely attached to one end of a piece of inch gas pipe twelve feet long. The other end of the pipe was flattened out, to permit its passing readily through the grip slot of the cable road, and was provided with a pair of self-acting spring nippers, ingeniously constructed of nickel, and so affixed as to act in the capacity

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of a grip. Front and rear guards held the structure upright. Just below the skull the pipe passed through a strip of board, two feet long by three inches wide, which served as shoulders. Over this the white shroud, which fell to within two feet of the ground, was loosely draped, while to one end of the strip the skeleton arm was fastened. Lower down, at right angles with the first, was a second board, with rounded ends, which served to give the drapery a natural spread, as well as to prevent a fracture of the skull when the figure was suddenly felled by its operators, as the two friends had seen it.

“John,” said Joyce, after the examination had been made, “look at these two revolvers, and then tell us what you’ve got to say for yourself.”

“Him not my glost,” repeated the Chinaman, sullenly.

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“ Whose is it, then? ”

“ Him Wun Lung glost.”

“ Who is Wun Lung, and where does he live? ”

“ Him no livee — him dead.”

“ Oh! So this is his ghost. Why did you knock it down? ”

“ Wun Lung say, ‘ go catchee glost.’ ”

“ Here! ” interrupted Nelson, “ you just said Wun Lung was dead.”

Joyce waved his hand with some impatience. “ What’s your name? ” he continued.

“ My name Sing Lo — me velly good cook — me — ”

“ Hold on, Lo. Nelson, I’ll match you pennies to see which of us is to give Sing Lo a dollar to tell us the whole story about the ghost.”

“ I’ll go you,” grumbled the lawyer, “ but it isn’t good law.”

“ Here you are, Sing Lo. Here’s

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your dollar — now tell us everything, and we'll let you go."

"You givee me back Wun Lung glost?"

"Yes — go ahead."

This assurance, with the sight of the broad coin and the disappearance of the pistols, worked wonders with the hitherto quaking and evasive laundryman, and in his best English and most straightforward manner — circumlocutory as it was — he related the particulars of an interesting tale.

It appeared that Wun Lung — whose mortal remains the ingenious contrivance captured had been meant to simulate — had been the proprietor of a laundry on Dupont Street, a profitable spot, the site of which appealed to Michael O'Brien, a local politician, as very desirable for the location of a saloon, but his offer to purchase was de-

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clined and his threats disregarded. The disappointed Irishman therefore proceeded to extreme measures, broke up the laundry and shot the owner, who was Sing Lo's employer, but was promptly released with a five-dollar fine by a compatriot on the bench, on the ground of self-defence. When O'Brien established his residence and saloon on the dead Chinaman's premises, a junior Wun Lung conceived the ingenious idea of frightening the murderer away with the "ghost" of his victim. The ghastly dummy was constructed and sent flying up and down the hill at midnight, being attached to and removed from the cable by Sing Lo and his fellow-laundryman, Ah Wing, while Wun Lung himself roused the saloon keeper from drunken slumber by a sharp tapping on his window by means of a "tick-tack," as boys call an ingenious combination of string, pin,

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and nail. The appeal to the fears of O'Brien and the identity of the spectre were emphasized by the solitary bleached hand of the apparition, the departed Wun having had but a single arm during the latter years of his life.

"Why did your friend make this contrivance of nickel?" asked Nelson, with the instinctive inquisitiveness of his legal training.

Sing Lo grinned as he replied:

"Wun Lung say, 'Put-um nickel in slot, Ilishman see-um glost.'"

With an additional dollar, designated by Nelson as "witness fees," and with his late employer's ghost under his arm, the Chinaman was released and drifted out into the darkness of Chinatown.

Half an hour later, Joyce was on his way to the home of his friends. He paused a moment at Dupont Street, and

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there, near the corner, read the following sign:

MICHAEL O'BRIEN
CHOICE WINES AND LIQUORS

Some few months afterwards, on returning from his honeymoon, which was passed among the grand scenery of Washington and Oregon, he found himself again near the corner of Dupont Street, with his bride. With a start of remembrance and recognition, he looked up. The imposing black and gold of the liquor sign had disappeared, and in its place, in gold and red, a smaller board bore the significant inscription:

WUN LUNG
CHINESE LAUNDRY

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It was evident to Malcolm Joyce that on the night of his memorable adventure Mr. Michael O'Brien had taken the bony semblance of his Celestial victim for The Real Thing.

WHEN THE CUCKOO CALLED

When the Cuckoo Called

THE announcement that London music hall audiences are losing their heads and hearts over "The Girl with the Guitar" causes Mr. Seymour Gaston to smile as he looks down upon the world from his offices on the nineteenth floor of a New York sky-scraper. Mr. Gaston is an ingenious, much traveled young bachelor with a history and a fortune. He recently invented a folding fire-escape, which also has a history and in which another fortune is said to await him. And "The Girl with the Guitar" is one of the two Zillerthaler sisters, whose permanent address is unknown and who receive two hundred guineas a night for presenting their Tyrolean

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second-sight séance. To such an extent do these mysterious maidens from the mountains hypnotize the public that they appear nightly at four different music halls. At the Alhambra they open the performance at eight o'clock, after which they are rushed by their manager in an automobile to the stage door of the second music hall, where they appear at eight forty-five, and so on, winding up at the Aquarium at a few minutes before ten with a thousand dollars in their pockets for the evening's work.

When the curtain rises upon their ten-minute act it discloses a typical Tyrolean scene — dim mountains in the background, a sombre pine forest, a toylike, gabled cottage in the distance. The lights are low and the stage is empty. The orchestra begins almost inaudibly a simple melody in the minor key. Presently a rich voice, that raises

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doubt in the mind of the listener as to whether it is male or female, joins in. It is a song of love, a serenade. The lights grow dimmer. A new sound steals into the concerted music of voice and instruments; there are strange, bizarre chords and rippling arpeggios, and then the music is drowned in the burst of wild applause that greets the appearance of "The Girl with the Guitar." She bows modestly, the lights go up, the rich voice is heard again in a joyous yodel, and the sister, too, appears, dressed in the picturesque attire of an Alpine hunter. This artistically conceived prologue brings the audience into closer sympathy with what follows. "The Girl with the Guitar," unheeding the applause and the demonstrations of the male portion of the audience, seats herself at the extreme right of the stage near the footlights. The sister is led by the manager along

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a narrow platform projecting into the centre of the hall, where, after being blindfolded, she seats herself with her back to the stage, and the real performance begins, to the muted music of the orchestra and the sad, fantastic chords of the guitar. The second-sight séance progresses in the time-honored way, except that no word is spoken save by the blindfolded sister, who accurately names and describes, in a clear, musical voice, each article as it is borrowed from the audience and held up in silence before the footlights by the manager, some thirty feet behind her back. "A gold watch with a picture of a lady on its face"; "a pair of pearl opera glasses"; "a half-crown piece with a hole in it"; and so on, the blindfolded girl describes the exhibits as though they were held out before her naked eyes. She never falters, never misses, and the puzzled look that comes

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to every face shows how completely she has mastered her art. But it is the strange, brilliant beauty and the fantastic music of "The Girl with the Guitar," who, seemingly unconscious of her surroundings, gazes idly across the stage, that hold the breathless attention of the audience. Music like hers has never before been heard from any instrument. It is absolutely unique; a new scale and new system of harmonics seem to have been discovered by this sombre-eyed girl. It is her weird, haunting melodies that trouble the mind with strange thoughts, and the impression of mystical, occult powers at work, produced by the performance, is really traceable to this music and the mysterious personality of the girl which pervades and dominates it all.

All this vividly recalls to Mr. Gaston a ten-minute drama of life in which he once played a part and which illus-

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trates how a man can regain his lost peace of mind by being suddenly brought to the brink of eternity.

Four years ago, while he was managing the affairs of a large American enterprise in London, a cablegram announced to him one day that his business partner in the United States had robbed him of all he possessed. Brooding over his ruined business, to which he had given ten years of his life and sacrificed his health, his peace of mind fled and he traveled aimlessly over the Continent in search of anything that might bring him sleep and help him to bury the past. The doctors sent him to Baden-Baden, but he soon found that the conventional watering-place, where one reads suffering in almost every face, proved an irritant to his insomnia. The more he came in contact with humanity the more he felt drawn toward Nature. So he started on a tour

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of the Black Forest. At Trieburg, the picturesque little village which stands on the edge of a great waterfall high up in the dark, pine-clothed mountains, he found pleasure for a few days in visiting the quaint cottages scattered through the surrounding wilderness where the cuckoo clocks, music-boxes and wood carvings are made that always attract foreigners. The mountaineers carry these clocks and carvings on the back for miles down the winding, perilous pathways to a public exhibition hall at Trieburg in which is kept a full line of samples for the convenience of purchasers.

But the novelty of these scenes soon wore off, and on the third day after his arrival Gaston, craving excitement, bribed the custodian of this exhibition hall to set off all the clocks and instruments at intervals of one second. The chorus of a thousand cuckoos, rein-

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forced by the patriotic rendering of "Die Wacht am Rhein," the William Tell Overture and "Die Lorelei" by scores of orchestrions and music-boxes, delighted him, but proved demoralizing to a party of American tourists bent on doing Europe in ten days. Mistaking their excited brandishing of alpen-stocks, umbrellas and Baedekers for demonstrations of approval, the keeper kept up the performance until the inexorable schedule dragged the prospective purchasers away. They had spent the ten minutes allotted to the Black Forest.

In his wanderings and search for adventure, Gaston came one day upon what seemed like an unused trail that led higher up the mountain from an almost impenetrable jumble of rocks and pines near the waterfall.

"The Witches' Path," exclaimed his landlord, when questioned, "and who-

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ever follows it never returns." It might have an outlet in another valley beyond, he added, but, shaking his head, there were strange stories about the Witches' Path, and while he could not verify them he knew that no one of his guests who had essayed to explore it had ever come back.

Sick of chattering men and women, harrowed day and night by his troubles, Gaston rejoiced in the prospect of an adventure of any kind, and while he smiled at the suggestion of danger lurking in the recesses of the Witches' Path, he secretly hoped there might be. Life was not a joyful possession to Seymour Gaston in those days, and he cared little whether he lived or died. So, early the following morning, with a well-provisioned knapsack on his back and an alpenstock in his hand, he set out upon the Witches' Path. After ten hours of climbing, crawling, sliding

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and slipping over almost impassable rocks and through impossible thickets, the trail led into a stretch of forest so dense as to completely shut out the fading daylight, and the wanderer was glad to accept as a bed the thick, endless carpet of pine needles that lay stretched out before him. The following morning he resumed his journey and at noon discovered, high on the mountain side, what appeared like a gray toy-house hidden among the rocks and pines. After another hour of tiresome climbing he stood before a cottage built upon the very edge of an immense cleft. From far below echoed the hoarse booming of a mountain stream. His knock was answered by a short, white-bearded mountaineer with piercing gray eyes, who, upon learning that his visitor spoke German, received him hospitably with the remark that it was seldom indeed that visitors came his

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way to brighten the lonely lives of himself and niece, who, he added, lived by making cuckoo clocks. It required no urging on the part of Caspar Kollner, the cottager, to induce his guest to defer his return until the following day, and after supper, served by the mountaineer's attractive young niece, the tourist was equally willing to join his host in a pipe and game of écarté, while the young lady looked on and played weird airs upon her guitar. Whether it was the strange quality of her undeniable beauty and the sombre mystery of her eyes, or her music, Gaston soon lost interest in the game. Although there seemed little purpose or training in her half listless playing, the sounds seemed to hint at unfathomable things, at fancies such as Gaston supposed might visit the soul of one who had strayed from the paths of his fellow-men into an exotic, unhealthy

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world of his own, where strange birds sang in a dusky, scented twilight. He played recklessly, lost steadily, and was repeatedly compelled to resort to the Bank of England notes in his wallet.

“ You are in bad luck to-night. Shall we stop? You must be tired after your long tramp,” at last suggested the host. Then, counting the money slowly and with evident pleasure, he handed to Gaston all the latter had lost. It was promptly pushed back protestingly, whereupon Kollner exclaimed, “ Never! The pleasure is mine; the money is yours. It is my custom to play for stakes to lend interest to the game, but the law of hospitality forbids my keeping what I win.” So Gaston returned the money to his wallet and bade his generous host and hostess good-night. Kollner led him to a large, low-studded room on the upper floor in which every

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article of furniture was elaborately hand-carved.

“The masterpiece of my craft,” exclaimed Kollner, as he pointed with pride to a mammoth cuckoo clock, fully four feet wide and reaching nearly to the ceiling. “But our proudest possession,” he continued, as he led his guest through a tall French window upon a small veranda, “is this,” pointing to a view that caused Gaston to gasp for breath. The balcony directly overhung the mighty gorge, and from the gulf of blackness far below rose the sound of the tumultuous stream, while an uncertain moon threw fantastic shadows over the towering peaks above. Most wonderful of all,” continued Kollner, “is the echo, ‘The Ghost of the Gorge’ as it is called. You shall hear it at dawn.” With that he wound up and set the big clock, adding, “When the cuckoo calls, rise and

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come to this balcony. My niece shall play from the rocks below and you will hear the spirit answer. Good-night! ”

As on many other weary nights, sleep refused to come to Gaston. He lay for hours listening to the gurgle of the water and hearing in it echoes of the wild music of the guitar. Towards morning a feverish slumber came, from which he was aroused by the shrill “ Cuckoo! Cuckoo! ” of the mechanical bird.

Clad in his pajamas he drowsily groped his way in the dusk towards the balcony. He had almost reached it when he overturned the chair which had served to keep the window half open during the night. In its outward fall it carried down the balcony with a crash and Gaston, horror-stricken, barely kept his balance by grasping the window casing. From the dark chasm rose the weird strains of the guitar,

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echoing through the gorge. The Lorelei was calling! But her notes were drowned by the shrill creaking of the iron hinges upon which the balcony now swung to and fro below Gaston, and which, like a flash, told him he had been led to a man-trap of hellish ingenuity. Instantly horror gave way to anger and the instinct of self-defence roused him to action. For months he had been reckless of danger, almost courted death. Now he was seized with an overpowering desire to live. He turned from the window and began to dress hurriedly when a noise attracted his attention to the cuckoo clock. Was it a hideous delusion? No! The thing was actually moving towards the centre of the room! In another instant Kollner appeared from an adjoining room through a door which the clock had concealed, his eyes glaring fiendishly as they rested upon the empty bed. Then,

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as he turned and saw Gaston, his face became a mask of absolute fright and bewilderment. For a moment only he recoiled, then flung himself upon his guest with the fury of a beast. Each instantly realized that the struggle would be to the death. Frenzied by the miscarrying of his diabolical plot, the mountaineer struggled madly, blindly, for a grip that should enable him to hurl his adversary over the mighty precipice. Foiled again and again by the agility of Gaston and forced to the defensive, he turned towards the open door to escape. As he did so Gaston rushed upon him, pinned his arms to his sides, and pushed him inch by inch to the open window, and — Caspar Kollner reached the end of the Witches' Path! Ten minutes later Gaston found the niece quietly preparing breakfast. She looked surprised, but when he told her that her uncle and not he had an-

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swered the Lorelei's call, she asked, with naïve innocence, what he meant. It was only after he had threatened to hand her over to the police at Triebberg that she made this confession: —

She had been brought up by her uncle, who had invented the folding balcony, and who always engaged his guests in a game of cards. He invariably won because he had taught her as a child to signal, by means of notes and chords on the guitar, the cards held by his opponent. He thus learned if his guests were supplied with money, and to gain their full confidence returned all they had lost. He was enabled to set the man-trap from his room below. Although the gorge held the remains of thirty victims, it was his boast that he had never killed a man, that each had of his own free will walked into eternity.

Gaston had heard enough. He did

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not stop for breakfast. He left Trieb-berg the following evening and thoughts of his business troubles no longer occupied his mind. When he returned to America he set to work to retrieve his lost fortune, and the folding fire-escape, he tells his friends, was suggested by something he saw abroad.

Gaston does not claim the gift of second sight, but he knows, he says, that in the performance of the Zillerthalers, the weird strains produced by "The Girl with the Guitar" describe to her blindfolded sister the articles borrowed of the audience.

ONE CHANCE IN A MILLION

One Chance in a Million

AS the traveler, turning his back to the setting sun, descends into Paradise Valley, there spreads before him a brilliant checker-board of orchard and vineyard. Beyond this an extensive and picturesque group of red buildings gleams still ruddier, and upon one corner of the roof of the principal structure a small house of glass glistens like a huge jewel in the sunset glow. Approaching nearer, the buildings are seen to be surrounded by parks and gardens, where men and women are amusing themselves with golf and baseball, croquet and tennis, under the watchful eyes of discreet attendants.

Here is the home of many a human wreck, cast upon the shores of mental

One Chance in a Million

oblivion in the strenuous struggle of life — the man who, during the gold fever of '49, found fortune to lose all else, he who sacrificed everything and gained nothing, and hundreds of others, men and women, who have proved unequal to the strain on nerve and brain imposed by the stress of an unkindly Fate.

Walking apart from these groups may be seen a white-haired man of melancholy mien, who pauses occasionally and makes a peculiar motion with his hands, as if in the act of cutting with an imaginary pocket knife. This man is the sole occupant of the glass house on the roof, which is always brilliantly lighted, blazing all night with electric lamps. At intervals of a few months, he is visited by two ladies, who seem extremely solicitous for his welfare, and twice a year a noted alienist from Paris comes to study this interest-

One Chance in a Million

ing case. Here is the story of this peculiar patient:

Anyone with a sweet tooth and a good memory will recall the curious little pear-shaped sweetmeats which were so popular thirty years ago and then suddenly dropped out of sight. Everyone bought and talked of the new candy, which was small, apple-green and translucent, with a curious red streak in the core. It was not only very delicious to the taste, but produced a strange effect of mental and physical stimulation, of buoyancy — almost of intoxication. Totally different from the action of any known drug, however, and especially from alcohol, it had absolutely no deleterious reaction, but on the contrary seemed to exercise a tonic influence upon the nervous system. Joy Drops, as they were called, were carried in school-children's satchels, sold on trains, taken as a "pick-

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me-up " by men, ordered by society ladies for their " functions " and consumed by shop-girls by the ton.

The enormous profits from their sales were not divided among shareholders, but all went to one man, Walter H. Torreton, the inventor and manufacturer, who, starting in a small way, had constantly increased his business and incidentally the fame of the Lake city where he lived. There he bought the handsomest estate on Park Avenue and built extensive conservatories, giving much personal attention to a unique species of lily, which had never before been seen, called by him the multi-bloom.

As the fame of Torreton's confectionery spread, other manufacturers put imitations on the market, but without success. Though their candy looked much the same, it wholly lacked the peculiar qualities of the genuine

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Joy Drops, in which analysis had failed to reveal anything more than sugar, a little fruit flavoring and the merest trace of some quite unknown but very volatile essence, which appeared to be located in the red central stripe.

Torreton received large offers for the use of his secret formula, but these he promptly declined, and went on enlarging his business. Then his competitors began a systematic endeavor to steal what they could not buy. Information was lodged with the internal revenue officers that the candy contained alcohol, but this was disproved by the government analysis, which, however, utterly failed to show the nature of the characteristic ingredient. Torreton often found spy-glasses and cameras levelled upon his laboratory windows from buildings across the way. Repeated attempts were made to bribe his workmen, but they only

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served to bring out the fact that no one knew the secret but Torreton himself. Then complaint was brought against him for violating the fire regulations, and among the inspectors who came when an investigation was ordered he recognized a chemist from Chicago. But even this spy, after gaining access to the citadel, and peering and sniffing about the premises, could find no clue but a strange aroma which he could not identify. Some express packages which arrived at the factory were traced back to Amsterdam, where, after a tedious search, it was found that they had been originally shipped across the ocean by Torreton himself, merely as a blind. When it seemed as if persecution and inquisition could go no further, the inventor, one evening on leaving the factory, discovered a small balloon anchored over his laboratory skylight!

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Not long after this, a real estate firm, acting, it was surmised, for a foreign syndicate, bought a vacant trace of land on the outskirts, commonly known as Sumach Park. On the high ground in the centre a large brick building was erected and enclosed by a high brick wall like those which give privacy to many English estates. The building itself was surmounted by a glass structure, somewhat like the lantern of a lighthouse, and was the cause of much curiosity. This curiosity was partially gratified eventually, and the story of a foreign syndicate shattered by the following notice, which appeared one evening in all the papers:

ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD will be paid by the undersigned to the person who first brings news to his residence on Park Avenue that the electric light has gone out in the cupola of the new Torreton Confectionery Works, in Sumach Park.

WALTER H. TORRETON.

As soon as the papers were on the street, men went out of their way to

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get a look at the new light. There it was, sure enough, and as the darkness gathered it displayed a beautiful green pear, with a red streak in the centre, a gleaming reproduction of the famous candy. It was pronounced a great advertisement, but one scarcely necessary in a locality where the confection itself was already in the mouth of everybody. However, the reward offered was tempting, and not only did every policeman and fireman immediately become a night watchman for the Torreton works, but every man and boy as well who could invent any pretext for being out.

But while thus, in one sense, subjected to closer espionage than ever, Torreton's factory was no longer troubled by the spies of his rivals, and his business increased even beyond his expectations. Still he labored regularly as ever, and lived with his wife and

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niece just as quietly, his only extravagance being frequent additions to his greenhouses.

The light in the cupola burned steadily, and the tempting reward seemed destined to remain unclaimed, until one evening more than two years after the completion of the building, when a newsboy lingering late in the endeavor to dispose of an overstock of "extrys" suddenly saw a blurred halo surrounding the green and red beacon. It trembled, grew pale and —

The light went out!

Dropping his papers, the boy took the shortest route to Park Avenue, but soon found he was not alone in the race for the Torreton residence, as he passed men and boys and even women, all silently striving for the promised reward. A watchful and active fireman was the first to arrive in the presence of Mrs. Torreton to claim it, and

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she, with her niece, who acted as confidential secretary to her uncle at the factory, were already in a carriage swinging out of the grounds when the great body of panting messengers arrived.

During the anxious drive to Sumach Park, the girl explained that, rather earlier than usual, her uncle told her he was going to the city and would not return to the works. When she started for home she had noticed that the door to a small inner laboratory vault, in which Mr. Torreton kept his most important chemicals and papers, was open. She had closed and locked it. What connection this incident might have with the extinguishing of the light she could not imagine, yet she felt that something was wrong, as any attempt to enter the building by night would put out the beacon and give an alarm.

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Followed by Mrs. Torreton and a policeman from the crowd assembled about the factory, the niece led the way through the building. Although this was four stories high, all the stairways and elevators stopped at the third floor. The private laboratories on the top floor were never entered by any one but Torreton and his niece, who went there daily, drawing themselves up by an ingenious contrivance like a dumb waiter built into the wall and concealed behind a panel in the private secretary's office. To this she now went, and under her direction the others ascended one at a time to the floor above. The laboratory was in darkness, and the electric light would not work. But as they approached the door of the vault by lantern light, strange noises were heard. Tremblingly the girl worked the combination and released the heavy door. Torreton was there and alive,

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and without speaking he stumbled blindly toward the light, and then fell unconscious.

Before closing the vault again, the niece looked wonderingly in. Burned matches and paper ashes attracted her attention. They lay on the floor, beneath the electric light bracket. On a shelf lay a note hastily scrawled on a Joy Drop wrapper:

“Locked in — suffocating. Secret shall die with me. Have burned the formula. Wife has enough—she shall not be persecuted as I have been. Good-bye.”

Beneath this was written:

“A thought has come to me that may save my life: *I shall try to give the alarm by cutting the electric wires and putting out the cupola light.*”

He had indeed given the alarm in time to save his life, but his mind be-

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came a complete blank. The Torretton Joy Drops disappeared from the market, and the light in the cupola of the deserted works has never been re-lighted. Finally, even the family residence was given to the city for a hospital, but it was not until after the extensive greenhouses had been dismantled and their treasures scattered that it was suggested that they might have held the secret of the famous sweetmeat. That secret, with its possibilities, lies hopelessly buried in the darkened brain of Walter Torretton.

And it is darkness alone that disturbs him now. It was observed from the beginning of the attempts to treat his remarkable case that he displayed the utmost repugnance to darkness, and grew nervous, uneasy and wild as twilight came on. He is happy only in a glare of light, and it was upon the advice of an eminent Parisian special-

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ist that he was finally removed to the beautiful California valley, where he lives, day and night, in a flood of radiance. His mind slipped a cog, the specialist says, which may slip back again, just as a train that has jumped the track may jump back — but it is one chance in a million.

DOODLE'S DISCOVERY

Doodle's Discovery

JOHN JEFFERSON DOODLE derived a large amount of pleasure from the knowledge that he was considered a crank. In Doodle's opinion cranks were persons who, knowing the right way, refused to have things done in any other. John Jefferson demanded full value for his own money and persisted in giving the same in return for the money of others. Business back-steps, fool fakery, and lame excuses were foreign to his methods, so when he opened his restaurant success was assured. Doodle's was the most up-to-date café in the entire eating zone. The food, service and appointments were of the best, and from the opening day the future prosperity of Doodle was something that a fifth-

Doodle's Discovery

rate prophet could foretell without running the risk of a headache.

But Doodle's Café was in the direct line of a trouble cyclone. In the wash-rooms connected with the establishment the proprietor supplied the finest toilet soap that money could buy, but unfortunately for the peace of mind of John Jefferson he was called upon to supply much more than legitimate demands required. Expensive soap proved a tempting bait to unprincipled patrons, and Doodle soon discovered that something like forty dollars' worth of soap was required to meet the daily demands of his six hundred patrons. Legitimate hand-washing could not possibly be responsible for this enormous outlay, so Doodle set his brain the task of devising a plan by which the thieves could be detected.

As all the world knows, various ingenious schemes have been tried with

Doodle's Discovery

the object of protecting the soap in the washrooms of hotels and restaurants. The cakes have been chained to the washstands, for example, only to be cut away by well-to-do people who take things as they come. Again, hotel proprietors have put up liquid soap in fixed contrivances, but the kleptomaniacs outwitted the vigilance of the worried owners. The soap was carried away in bottles, and the unfortunate proprietors, finding it impossible to circumvent the ingenuity of the thieves, furnished common soap in large quantities as the only means of lessening their loss.

But Doodle continued to buy the finest toilet soap that was on the market, and he was determined that no thief would make him change his methods. On this account he set his wits to work and Doodle's Soap Thief Detector was the result.

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The café owner was in rapture over his invention. Its ability to do all that he claimed for it was beyond question. He had it patented, fitted to the wash-stands, and then awaited results.

The Detector was a simple contrivance. It consisted of a small kodak-like arrangement concealed behind the mirror that hung above each wash-bowl, the eye of the camera being hidden among the electric light fixtures. The picture-taking device was connected with the soap tray in such a manner that a person lifting the soap relieved the pressure upon a button in the bottom of the tray and was by this means immediately photographed by the unseen instrument. When the soap was replaced a self-developing film was moved up in readiness to snap the next person who lifted the tablet, but if it was not replaced the photographic

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apparatus stopped working and the picture of the soap thief was, therefore, the last on the film.

Doodle gave orders to his staff to immediately report to him when they found a cake of soap missing from its tray, and on the first day he waited anxiously. John Jefferson had philanthropic ideas and he considered the exposure of a soap thief an act for the benefit of the community. He had not long to wait. Dinner had scarcely begun when a cake of soap was reported missing and the proprietor immediately stepped to the washroom and took the film from its place of concealment. The last snapshot was that of a well-dressed middle-aged man, and Doodle, with the long film in his hand, walked down the big dining-room in search of the original. At the very last table he found his man, and, leaning over, addressed him.

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“ Pardon me,” he said, quietly, touching an overcoat that hung near the customer, “ is this your overcoat? ”

The diner nodded.

“ Then,” continued John Jefferson, “ will you kindly take out of the pocket the cake of soap you took from the wash-stand a few moments ago? ”

The accused man grew red in the face and indignant, but Doodle was persistent.

“ Very well,” he said, when the customer refused to comply with the request, “ I will take it out myself. It belongs to me.”

He inserted his hand in the pocket of the overcoat and drew forth the missing soap wrapped in one of the small hand towels also belonging to the establishment.

“ As I thought,” commented Doodle. “ A wet piece of soap calls for a dry wrapper, and I suffer doubly. Now,

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sir, you had better keep quiet. I have the picture of the fellow who took the soap, and that picture is yours." He pushed the film before the eyes of the astonished diner and that person immediately grabbed his hat and coat, paid his check, and fled.

The Thief Detector did good work on its first day. Twenty-seven prominent citizens were among those detected, and the machine finished up the day's work by photographing the mayor of the city, who was accompanied by three ladies. The official blustered when Doodle made the accusation, but, like the others, was forced into a corner when confronted with the tell-tale film, and he drew a cake of soap from his pocket when the proprietor threatened to call an officer.

In ten days Doodle had recovered thirteen hundred and eleven cakes of soap, or, more correctly speaking, he

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had recovered several cakes thirteen hundred and eleven times from the same number of soap thieves, who were ignorant of the fact that their theft had been recorded by the unseen instrument. And in no single instance had the Detector made a mistake.

But Doodle found that the detection of soap thieves was a costly business. The thirteen hundred and eleven customers detected in the act of purloining the cakes of soap did not return, and each day made matters worse. The Detector's average decreased as the patrons fell away, but each day it scored its victims.

And Doodle was determined. He had made up his mind that he would not allow a man who paid seventy-five cents for a dinner to carry off forty cents' worth of soap, and the moment the machine registered a thief John Jefferson lost no time in making the

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accusation and recovering the stolen property.

On the twenty-fifth day after the installation of the invention Doodle had but ten customers to dinner, and before the meal was over John Jefferson Doodle retired to his office, and throwing himself into a chair spent some two hours in considering the situation. He then arose and acted with sudden energy. He dictated a lengthy telegram and after seeing that it was immediately dispatched, he drafted a circular and had it typewritten. Then, with a satisfied expression upon his face, he sat down and awaited events.

And he had not long to wait. Two hours after the dispatch of the wire a fat man walked into the dining-rooms and asked for the proprietor. John Jefferson inclined his head and motioned the stranger to a seat.

“ I am the president of the Interna-

Doodle's Discovery

tional Toilet Soap Trust," said the newcomer eagerly, "and I came in response to your peculiar telegram. It is a trifle vague, and we want more information regarding the matter you mentioned."

John Jefferson Doodle stood up, and without speaking led the way to the washroom. With a grim smile upon his face he explained the mechanism of the Soap Thief Detector to the president of the International Toilet Soap Trust, and the fat man breathed heavily.

"There is nothing vague about this," sneered Doodle. "What I wired you is the truth. Nine out of every ten people who steal soap from hotels and restaurants never buy toilet soap. Therefore, the more thieving the more soap you will sell us, and it stands to reason that you do not wish the Thief Detector to come into general use."

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“Into general use?” queried the visitor.

“Yes,” snapped Doodle. “I’m going to have this circular printed, which tells the whole story in plain language. If every hotel, café, and boarding-house uses one — but, there, read it, and then I’ll talk terms with you.”

The president of the International Toilet Soap Trust leaned back in his chair and read the document, then he did some rapid figuring on the back of an envelope.

“What are your terms?” he asked sullenly.

“A quarter of a million for all rights,” cried Doodle. “If you don’t want it I guess that every member of the Hotel, Restaurant and Boarding House Union will feel glad when they get my circular. There are over two hundred thousand members, and the

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trifling sum of five dollars a head will yield me over a million."

The other stood silent for a moment, regarding the face of John Jefferson with his keen gray eyes.

"I couldn't do it on my own responsibility," he said at last.

"Get busy on the long-distance 'phone," suggested Doodle. "Call a special meeting of directors and explain matters, and I'll await the decision. If your people don't buy, I'll promise you that the Great Soap Thief Detector will be known from Mindanao to Baffin's Bay inside three months."

Three hours afterwards the fat man returned, and picking up a pen he wrote a check in favor of Doodle for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which he exchanged for a deed, conveying all rights in the Detector. He then stepped into the washroom, tore the picture machine from its hiding place,

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disconnected the wires leading to the soap tray, and ripped the film into a thousand pieces.

“ I’ve seen enough of that thing,” he growled angrily. “ ‘ Cleanliness is next to Godliness,’ and the man who stops another man from stealing soap is running pretty near the sin line, I take it.”

Then, with a final snort of disgust, he went out into the street, and the doors of Doodle’s Famous Dining-rooms were closed. Doodle the Crank was happy and — rich.

KOOTCHIE

Kootchie

THE east wind had failed to put in an appearance that evening, and the thermometer registered ninety-five under the stately elms of the Boston Common.

The family had gone away for the summer, and Buttons and the butler were out for an airing. Both were so well fed and so little exercised that they needed something to stir their blood.

Buttons was a sleek, fat pug, with a knowing eye and oily manner. They called him Buttons because the harness he wore about his forequarters was studded with shining ornaments.

His companion was likewise sleek and fat, and the amount of lofty dignity he stored under his bobtailed jacket

and broadcloth trousers told everybody that he was the butler. He carried a wicked little cane with a loaded head, and seemed to own the greater part of the earth.

As the two strolled proudly through the Beacon Street Mall, fate favored Buttons and the butler. There was a cat on the Common,—a pet cat without an escort. This cat belonged to one of the wealthy families who at the tail end of winter board up their city residences and go to the country to spend the summer and save their taxes. The owners of this particular cat had speeded missionaries to the four corners of the globe to evangelize the heathen, but their pet puss they had turned into the streets of the modern Athens to seek its own salvation. With no home or visible means of support, but with true feline fortitude, the dumb creature now haunted the doorstep of the deserted

mansion and grew thin. Hunger had at last driven her to the Common in the hope that she might surprise an erring sparrow, or, perchance, purloin a forgetful frog from the pond.

The instant Buttons spied her he gave chase and drove her for refuge into a small tree. Then he stood below and barked furiously, until the sympathizing butler shook the tree and gave him another chance. This time the cat barely succeeded in reaching a low perch on the iron fence, from which with terrified gaze she watched her tormentor.

“Why do you torture that cat?” angrily asked a quiet gentleman who sat on one of the shady benches holding a yellow-haired little girl on his knee.

“Oh, me and Buttons is having a little fun,” answered the butler. “Buttons is death on cats.”

Kootchie

The quiet man said nothing, but got up, helped the frightened cat to escape to a safe hiding-place, and then resumed his seat.

That night puss went to bed without a supper, while her owner presided at the one hundred and eleventh seaside anniversary of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and punctuated the courses of a fish dinner with rare vintages of missionary port.

The next evening the same heat hung heavily over the Beacon Street Mall, and Buttons and the butler were again taking an airing and looking for fun.

As Buttons neared the scene of his former encounter, he pricked up his ears, and sniffed the air for the scent of game. Presently his anxious eye was attracted by something his pug nose had failed to detect. On a bench near by sat the quiet gentleman whose

Kootchie

acquaintance Buttons and the butler had made on the previous evening. The same yellow-haired little girl was seated near him, intently watching the rings of cigar smoke he puffed high into the evening air. Between the two a huge inflated paper bag was surging to and fro. It was this paper bag that had caught the eye of Buttons. It interested him. Drawing himself all up in a heap, he proceeded with cautious, measured step to satisfy his curiosity. As he slowly approached the curious object, his low, fretful growls seemed to rouse it to renewed gymnastics. This frightened Buttons and caused him to turn tail and flee. His curiosity had, however, got the better of him, and, returning to what he deemed a safe distance, he began barking furiously.

“Cat, Buttons, where’s the cat?” came from the butler, who was lei-

Kootchie

surely bringing up the rear, unconscious of Buttons's find.

With renewed courage, the pug rushed towards the paper bag. He had almost reached it when the quiet gentleman gave the bag an opening twist, and, as a furry head with a pair of fiery eyes shot out, he exclaimed:

“ Hi, hi, Kootchie! ”

The earnestness with which Kootchie “ hi, hied ” became instantly apparent by the piteous howls that rose from out of the murderous clawing, snarling mass of flying fur and silver ornaments. And the speed with which Buttons's companion hastened to the rescue with his loaded cane proved that even a Boston butler can get a move on. Before he could interfere, however, the quiet gentleman took a hand in the game.

“ Stand back,” he demanded, in tones that showed he would brook no

Kootchie

interference. "Buttons is death on cats. Kootchie is death on pugs. You like fun. I like fair play."

In less than twenty seconds a crowd of loungers, newsboys, nurse-girls, and pedestrians hurried to the scene. In the confusion somebody thoughtfully told a policeman to ring for the "hurry-up" wagon. But before it arrived the butler was permitted to carry home in his arms what there was left of Buttons.

"Beat it, der cop!" shouted a newsboy, as the butler picked up his limp and disfigured companion. And, as the crowd scattered, every one was amused to see a fine, gray, stumpy-tailed cat make its way to the yellow-haired little maid on the bench.

As the latter lovingly stroked her shining coat she remarked proudly, "Kootchie is my little pussy tat. Papa say, 'Kootchie, put Buttons to sleep.'"

Kootchie

And the policeman winked with ghoulish satisfaction when the father spoke up, "Kootchie is a nine-jointed cyclone. She's a young California wild cat a friend in Tiger Valley sent me. I'm fond of pets, you know, and as she felt a bit homesick this evening I brought her out here for an airing."

HER EYES, YOUR HONOR

Her Eyes, Your Honor

“**T**HE witness is yours.”

As the prosecuting attorney sat down, the spectators craned their necks and eagerly leaned forward. Every one expected a merciless cross-examination, as the reputation of the young lawyer, who had been brought two hundred miles to defend the prisoner, had preceded him. And though Delos McWhorter had thus far taken no part in the proceedings, he was the most conspicuous figure in the great trial. One person alone rivaled him,—the mysterious woman who stood at the bar, charged with murder. The hush that fell upon the packed court-room as the man slowly rose to his feet resembled the awful silence with which

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the death sentence is awaited. As he stood silent and irresolute for a moment, the color rising to his plain, youthful face, his fingers nervously fumbling with a pencil, the spectators were conscious of a feeling of disappointment.

With almost boyish embarrassment, his eye sought that of the presiding judge; next he scanned the faces of the jury, and then, turning to the witness, in a voice at once gentle, sarcastic, and magnetic, he began:

“ Mr. Slade, I will trouble you to look once more very carefully at the prisoner. Perhaps she will rise that you may see her better. You have testified that shortly before eight on the night of the murder you saw this woman enter the apartment house of which you are the janitor, and in which the body of Charlotte Ames was found. Now, I would like to have you tell the

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jury just what it was in the appearance of the woman you say you then saw that enables you to swear to-day that she and the prisoner are one and the same person."

The witness, fearing a trap, hesitated, and nervously eyed the lawyer.

"I would like you to tell us," calmly continued the questioner, "whether you took such particular notice of her height, her face, her complexion, her hair, her nose, and her teeth during the few moments that you say you saw her in the dimly lighted hallway, four months ago, as to enable you to swear to-day that you cannot be mistaken. Was it her size, her apparent age, perhaps, or the color of her hair, or what?"

"It was her looks," answered the witness, squirming in his seat. "It's the same woman."

"Yes, her looks; but I must trouble

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you to answer my question so that the jury may have the whole truth before they are asked to send any one to the gallows. Remember, Mr. Slade, you are under oath. Now tell us, what was it? ”

“ We object,” came from the prosecuting attorney as he sprang to his feet. “ We object, your honor, to this attempt to intimidate the witness.”

Before the court could pass upon the objection, the witness, turning from his questioner to the court, exclaimed half defiantly:

“ It was her eyes, your honor! ”

“ That is all,” came from the lawyer for the defence, as he resumed his seat; and the spectators relaxed into a condition of restlessness that clearly showed their further disappointment.

Each of the succeeding witnesses declared without hesitation that the prisoner was the woman they had seen near

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the scene of the murder, either just before or shortly after the deed was discovered. As one after the other was dismissed by the defence, upon insisting under cross-examination that he could not possibly be mistaken, the faces of the government counsel beamed with satisfaction, while those of the spectators assumed the blankness of mystification. What was the strange lawyer there for? they whispered among themselves, and many turned toward the prisoner as though to ascertain whether she realized how surely her life was being sworn away. In his opening address the prosecuting attorney had said:

“ On the second day of last November, a woman residing in this town, young, rich, and notorious for her gay and reckless career, was found murdered in her bed at half past eight at night. Everything about the room was

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in perfect order. There had been no robbery, and the instrument used was found in her breast, where it had been driven to the heart. It was a gold ornament, such as a woman wears in her hair.

“ We shall not attempt to defend the character of the dead woman, but we shall ask that justice be done.

“ It is true that many a woman in this town had good reason to wish the murdered woman ill. It is true that there are men in the community who might have been driven by desperate hate, desperate love, or desperate jealousy, to do the deed, but, fortunately, before cruel suspicion made any blunder of that sort the police discovered the criminal. Almost simultaneously with the rumors of the murder came the reports of a mysterious woman found leaving the city. Within twelve hours this woman, who now stands at the bar,

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had been identified by no less than four people, who saw her in the vicinity of the scene of the crime either before or after it was committed.

“No one knew her. She refused to give any account of herself. She appeared to be in a state of great nervous excitement. The government will show that she entered the house shortly before the murder was committed; that she left it a few minutes after the deed was done; that on the very day of the murder she had high words with the dead woman, and that the instrument with which the deed was done was such an one as the prisoner was known to possess. Gentlemen of the jury,” he concluded dramatically, “Fate plays no tricks of that sort. Fate fashions no such chain of circumstantial evidence as that which establishes the guilt of this woman and upon which we ask her conviction.”

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These were his words, and now that the janitor had testified that he saw the prisoner enter the building, a patrolman had declared that he saw her leaving it within fifteen minutes before the crime was discovered, and the dead woman's coachman had sworn to having overheard the prisoner using threatening language to his mistress,—after this and other circumstantial evidence had gone before the jury and remained unshaken by cross-examination, the prosecution announced that the case for the government was in.

In spite of the disappointment with which the spectators regarded Lawyer McWhorter, a nervous dread of the man possessed the minds of the opposing counsel, as he rose slowly and deliberately clasped his hands behind him. He was so calm. His methods were so unfathomable that they began to feel a vague conviction that he mastered

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them and their methods, while to them he was a closed book.

A moment he stood silent, and, when he spoke, utter consternation fell upon the court. The words were the last they had expected.

“Your honor, the defence has no evidence to offer.”

Even the court could scarce control its amazement. Inch by inch the ground upon which the prisoner stood had been carried away, until now nothing but the personal appeal of her counsel could save her life. Was this possible? Did this young stranger really possess that rare eloquence, that fatal magnetism, that sometimes blind strong men to all sense of reason and right? Did even he hope to save his client? His looks betrayed nothing. As he took his seat his face was that of a sphinx.

The attorney for the government lost

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no time in beginning his closing speech. "We commend the judgment of the distinguished counsel for the defence," he began, "which deterred him from attacking the overwhelming proofs we have submitted of the prisoner's guilt. We commend the keen judgment which prompts him to rely upon the famed magic of his own voice rather than to seek hope for his client in the uncertain words of unreliable witnesses. The defence, too clever to attack such proof as we have presented, will now rely upon silvery tongued oratory and superb rhetorical appeals to secure from these twelve men a verdict of acquittal. But, may it please the court," he concluded, "our learned brother mistakes the intelligence of these gentlemen of the jury, if he supposes, for one moment, that fervent appeals to their sympathies can make them forget their duty to themselves, to civilized

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society, and to womankind." So well satisfied, however, had the spectators become of the prisoner's guilt, and so completely did all interest now center in McWhorter's anticipated speech, that the remarks of the prosecuting attorney were listened to with indifferent attention.

Now, surely, the brilliant advocate would demonstrate his ability, even though he could not save his client.

"The woman," he began, amid oppressive silence, "who was arrested on the second day of November last, stands charged with murder. As no testimony has been offered to show that she committed murder, the defence will not waste your time or insult your common sense by unnecessary argument. You have been told with great clearness by the witnesses for the prosecution that the prisoner was seen to enter and leave a certain house at certain

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hours; also that on a certain day she had high words with a certain woman. But, gentlemen of the jury, under the laws of your State that doesn't constitute murder. A woman may pay a visit to an apartment house at eight o'clock at night, she may have high words with another woman in the public highway, she may even wear a gold ornament in her hair,—she may do all this without becoming a murderess. The evidence adduced is purely circumstantial. No proof whatever has been offered that the accused woman killed Charlotte Ames. In the absence of such testimony, it is your duty to yourselves, to civilized society, and to womankind, to acquit the prisoner." Before the last word was spoken he sat down.

The entire court room was again taken by surprise. While the brief speech had the ring of cleverness, it

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fell far short of the general expectations.

After hearing the judge's charge to the jury not one person in that vast assembly doubted the result. Few felt any sympathy for the woman, and those few were men. The members of her own sex were as a unit arrayed against her. The pride of her pale beauty antagonized them. The very women who in their hearts had wished the dead girl ill and who would have committed the crime themselves, except that they lacked the courage, had no pity for the accused. There was something in her beauty above and beyond them, and, womanlike, they hated her for it.

Not a soul left the court room as the jury filed out, for all expected a prompt verdict. In this they were not disappointed. Ten minutes later the twelve men filed solemnly back. Not an eye

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sought the face of the prisoner, who, like her counsel, sat entirely unmoved.

As the clerk rose the silence became deathlike. "Prisoner, look upon the jury. Jury, look upon the prisoner. Have you agreed upon a verdict?"

"We have."

"Is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty of the crime charged against her?"

"Guilty."

With difficulty the demonstrations of approval that broke out in every part of the room were checked by the court officers.

Moved by that inevitable heart-stopping vision of "hanged by the neck," every spectator turned to the handsome woman in the dock.

The calmness with which she received the stares of a thousand eyes was marvelous. No one expected that she would now break her mysterious

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silence. When, therefore, she rose and turned her eyes towards the court the spectators sat fairly spellbound with surprise.

“May it please your honor,” she began in a firm, clear voice; then, lifting one slender white hand, she pointed to the door at the back of the witness stand.

Every eye followed her gesture. A tall female figure, heavily veiled, accompanied by one of the associate counsel of the defence, stood in the doorway. The next moment she raised her veil, advanced rapidly, and took her place beside the prisoner.

The scene that followed resembled a street riot, rather than the solemn proceedings of a court room. Men, wild with excitement, mounted their chairs, women rose in their seats, pushing, jostling, and crowding each other in their frantic efforts to get a better view

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of the highly sensational proceedings. The confusion was indescribable, the noise deafening. Not until McWhorter was seen to spring to his feet did the court officers' vigorous rapping and loud cries for order produce any effect. Instantly all was silence. Rigid suspense held the spectators breathless. With the light they had missed in his eye and the fire they had longed for in his voice the young lawyer spoke, addressing the judge:

“ May it please the court,—nice customs must bow to desperate needs. When a man is called upon to face in defence of a woman's life such odds as I found in this case, when he sees justice outwitted by the devil's trick,—circumstantial evidence, — he must resort to the devil's weapon, — cunning. Such evidence as has been here given has hanged many a man, and I believe that when a man of any heart, any soul,

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any chivalry, sees that it is likely to hang a woman it becomes his duty to combat fate as the defence has done in this case.

“ I ask your honor, I ask the jury, I ask the witnesses, to look upon these two women. As they stand there side by side, there is a marked difference in their heights, a decided difference in the color of their hair, a striking difference in the color of their eyes, a very perceptible difference, even at this distance, in the tone of their skin; and, I may add, a difference of eight years in their ages. The woman who has just been pronounced guilty of murder is the wife of a gentleman who throughout this trial has sat within the shadow of the jury. She is innocent, as God is my judge. Every moment of her life up to this very instant can be accounted for. In substituting her to-day for the real prisoner, the defence had no desire

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to circumvent justice. We merely wished to save this court, this community, from the everlasting shame of hanging a woman whose guilt has not been proved. We wished to show to your honor and to these gentlemen of the jury that it is monstrous to accept as conclusive such evidence as has been given in this case. May it please your honor, this jury has just pronounced a verdict of 'guilty' against my own wife. I move that here and now this verdict be set aside."

The request was granted, and, although McWhorter was charged with unprofessional conduct and threatened with disbarment, his client was promptly acquitted on the new trial which the court ordered.

FOR THE SAKE OF TOODLEUMS

For the Sake of Toodleums

“**N**OW, Bert, listen,” said Mrs. Rodney, taking her brother into full confidence. “I want to talk to you. Tom is really the best husband that ever was. Of course I’ve never had another husband, but just think how he adores our baby — our Toodleums!”

Bert Loring glanced at his sister’s face to gather that the last remark was as a gold seal on her husband’s virtues. She was young, pretty, and winsome. She was also Loring’s only sister. Nevertheless he rubbed his chin a trifle doubtfully, for Rodney was a sad failure in a business sense.

“Oh, well,” he returned at last. “Since you say so, I presume that settles the matter. You ought to know,

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Mary. Personally, I've nothing against Tom."

"No," she affirmed decisively. "No one could help liking Tom. He's just the most lovable fellow imaginable, so generous and kind-hearted toward every one."

"Um — er — Oh yes!" nodded the brother. "There's no question about Tom's generosity."

He was thinking of the last occasion when he chanced upon Tom downtown. With great cordiality Tom invited him to lunch. It was a capital lunch, too, nothing wanting, only—somehow Tom found it was unfortunately necessary to borrow five dollars to pay for it. He had forgotten to drop in at his bankers, By Golly! That was a joke on Tom, at which he laughed in the utmost good nature. His wife was quite right when she spoke of his kindly disposition toward every one.

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The waiter's smile bore witness to it, when helping to adjust Tom's overcoat. Loring went out with his overcoat collar bracing his ears. So much for the waiter's discernment.

"But, you see, Bert," explained Mrs. Rodney, "Tom's only drawback is that he has never been given a chance to prove what he is really worth. He's wonderfully bright."

"As bright as a new five dollar gold piece," subconsciously acquiesced the brother. He was still thinking of the lunch.

"And ambitious for bigger things," added Mrs. Rodney.

"I don't doubt it," nodded her brother. It occurred to him that Tom was capable of *ordering* a mighty fine dinner.

"Then, Bert, why don't you get him a good position in your insurance office?"

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“What!” he cried. “Pardon me, Mary, I didn’t quite — ”

“Hush!” she laid a finger on her lips. “Don’t be so noisy, Bert. You’ll wake Toodleums. Yes,” she went on in an undertone, “a good position in your insurance office. One in which Tom could shine and Toodleums feel proud of his Dada. You know how attached you are to Toodleums — the precious!”

“Yes, but you see, Mary,” her brother began to protest, “the shining positions in our office are pretty well all occupied. I don’t glitter much yet, and I’ve been years climbing up from the bottom.”

“But Tom is so brilliant — such a fine talker,” declared Mrs. Rodney enthusiastically. “If he were once given the chance he would jump right up to the top. Everybody likes him.”

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“ Well, our president has been pretty good to me,” he remarked. “ I’d really hate to see him lose his job—I mean within the next few weeks—even on Tom’s account.”

“ Bert, don’t be ridiculous and sarcastic. Toodleums—the love—does not like people who are sarcastic.”

“ No, probably not. But honestly, Mary, you must see what I mean. If I got Tom a position in our office, he would have to take his chance with the rest. But, as you say, he is a good talker, and might do pretty well in outside work.”

“ Then you will introduce him to your president? ”

Her face lit up with pride at the success of her plan to obtain a position for her husband.

“ I’ll put him in line to show what he’s made of. That’s all I can promise at present.”

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“Then you may kiss Toodleums,” she added by way of great reward.

She rose and moved softly toward a lace ruffled and beribboned shrine.

“And be careful, Bert,” she enjoined, “you don’t stumble over something and wake the sweetest. You are so clumsy in comparison with Tom.”

Loring faithfully kept the promise to his sister. He first spoke with Tom, pointing out the excellent chances for a good talker in the insurance business, and the agreeable nature of outside work. For the right man it might lead to the confidence of millionaires, and the friendship of United States Senators. Tom was quite enthusiastic.

“Just the thing,” he cried, slapping Loring on the shoulder. “The very position I’ve been looking for. Don’t worry about the beginning at the bottom of the ladder idea. I’ll climb up hand over fist. You watch me.”

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So Loring introduced his brother-in-law to the chief of the proper department, and with him Tom talked with much enthusiasm of purpose. He was finally told to report the next morning, when full instructions would be given. He was in such high feather on the way home that he bought a silver rattle for Toodleums—on credit.

His conference with the chief of his department the next morning was satisfactory in all respects. He appeared to grasp quickly the details of the various insurance policies, and spoke confidently of what he intended to do with the list of prominent citizens he was instructed to call upon.

“Mr. Vandermorgan. Sure! I’ll touch him for a one hundred thousand dollar policy right away. If I clean him up before lunch, I guess that would be doing something.”

“I guess it would,” agreed the chief,

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who knew how for many months they had fished unsuccessfully for Mr. Vandermorgan.

So Tom gathered up his papers and strode briskly out of the office. He took the elevator with the air of a man who talked in nothing less than six figures. Then he went out and walked around the block. When he came back to the majestic portals of the Long Life Building he paused to reflect. An idea seemed to occur to him. That it was a corking idea, the pleased expression on his face indicated. He again took the elevator, and was shot up to the floor on which his brother-in-law's office was located.

"Hello, Bert!" he greeted, looking in at the door.

"Hello, Tom! How's business? How are you getting along?"

"Fine! Just going out to tackle Vandermorgan."

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“ Good! Hope you’ll land him.”

“ Yes,” Tom proceeded, drawing a chair up to his brother-in-law’s desk, and spreading out his papers. “ But I thought I’d have a talk with you first.”

“ Well, go ahead. Glad to help out in any way possible.”

“ Yes, that’s just what I thought. Now, see here, Bert, how about your taking out one of our ten-thousand-dollar policies? ”

“ What! ” cried Loring, falling back in his chair. “ Man alive! What on earth do I want with a ten-thousand-dollar policy? ”

“ That’s the point. That’s just what I want to talk to you about,” argued Tom complacently. “ Every man ought to provide for the comfort and happiness of his wife after his death. That’s about how the chief said I might begin.”

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“ But you know I haven’t got a wife,” protested Loring.

“ Well, that doesn’t alter the case. Those near and dear to you will do as well,” went on Tom sympathetically. “ Those attached to you by the strongest ties.”

“ By the strongest ties? ” questioned Loring.

“ Sure! There are Mary and little Toodleums. As you are going to be Toodleums’ godfather do it for the sake of Toodleums. I’ll just fill out an application in his favor. Of course we’d hate for anything unfortunate to happen to you, but every man should make a suitable provision for those who are dear to him. The chief said that phrase usually catches on.”

“ Well, I’ll be hanged! ” ejaculated Loring.

“ I sincerely hope not,” fervently added Tom, as he prepared to fill out

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an application blank. " Shall we make it twenty or thirty thousand dollars? " he asked, looking up calmly.

" Make it five and then go and chase Vandermorgan," retorted Loring, fearful that worse might happen.

" All right. Five thousand dollars in favor of Toodleums. See you later, Bert," and with a smile Tom strolled out of Loring's office to deposit the signed application with the proper clerk. Suddenly he stopped, drew a pad and pencil from his pocket, and began figuring.

" By Jove," he exclaimed, " not a bad beginning! My commission on that policy is just forty-one dollars and I landed it in less than an hour. That's three hundred and twenty-eight dollars a day, one thousand nine hundred and sixty-eight dollars a week, and—"

His calculations were interrupted by Dick Willman, who grasped his hand

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and inquired: "How're you getting on, Tom, and where are you bound for? Bert tells me you've taken up life insurance."

"Congratulate me, old fellow. This very morning I dropped into a berth that pays me a hundred thousand a year. I'm through for to-day and am off for home to tell my wife. So long"—and Tom was gone.

He had not yet reached the elevator when he turned, called back to his friend, and going up to him, his face still wreathed in smiles, confided: "Dick, in my hurry to get down to business this morning I came away without even car fare. Loan me a five. Ah, thank you. And come have a bird and a bottle with me at the club tomorrow. Bye-bye," and once more Tom was on his way to carry the news to Mary.

"I knew it and always told people

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you would make good if you only had half a chance," interrupted his wife, as Tom triumphantly related his morning's success to her.

"Oh, yes," agreed the husband. "I know how to get there all right. By the way, how's Toodleums and how does he like his new rattle?"

IN HELL'S CAÑON

In Hell's Cañon

ADVENTUROUS prospectors who have followed the perilous trails over the Cabinet Mountains have, as a matter of course, heard of the Lost Lead, but only he who is a total stranger to fear has penetrated the chaotic wilderness of Hell's Cañon, and thus come suddenly upon the Grave of Gold. Four rude granite posts, connected by heavy log chains, enclose the spot. On the face of the giant boulder that stands guard over the few square feet of sacred earth is carved:

THE LOST LEAD. LOUIS GILBERT. 1860-1891.
--

This inscription marks the loneliest, yet richest, grave in the world.

In Hell's Cañon

Late in the spring of 1889, Louis Gilbert left his home in Kentucky for a visit to his uncle's mine in the Northwest. He had lung trouble, and the doctor had ordered an outdoor life. While his health improved, he became infected with another ailment, perhaps the only one to be caught at that altitude—the gold fever. Miners were his only associates, the talk was all of lodes, leads and drifts, and the only communication with the outside world was by the train of pack mules that carried the heavy ore sacks down the winding trail. So it was not surprising that his walks took the character of prospecting tours, and carried him farther and farther from camp. Late in October, when his visit was nearly over, he started with three days' food for a last trip, into new territory. From a conical mountain top about ten miles west of the mine, he had looked

In Hell's Cañon

over a lower range of summits to a great expanse of wild and broken country that he had never explored.

The weather was like summer when he started, but thirty-six hours later, on the evening of the second day, a fierce snowstorm set in. By midnight, the first blizzard of the season was raging through the mountains. On the third day the storm still howled furiously, but searching parties were sent out with a faint hope of finding the young prospector before the trails became entirely impassable. In the dim twilight of the afternoon they returned one by one, almost worn out, convinced that the body of the missing man would not be found till the warm winds of spring should melt away the drifts. Yet, as a humane precaution, lights were kept burning all night in cabin windows, and, guided by one of them, Louis Gilbert staggered into camp and

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fell like a dead man before the mess-room door. He was taken from the snow, wrapped in blankets and laid before a blazing fire. When he showed signs of life he was given hot drinks and put to bed. His prospector's belt dropped to the floor like lead, and when opened was found to be stuffed with nuggets of virgin gold.

In the fever that followed, Gilbert talked deliriously of his long struggle through the blinding drifts, hungry, cold and aching for the sleep which would mean death, yet forcing himself onward with the blizzard at his back as his only guide. The amazing richness of his find had given him the strength that saved his life.

Finally he opened his eyes with the old look and told in detail the story of his wonderful discovery. On the east side of a stream, in a cañon so terribly wild and broken that it was almost

In Hell's Cañon

impassable, he had found the gold on the very surface of a ledge.

Filling his belt, he had started to blaze his way back, when the storm came down with frightful violence. The rest of the journey was simply a horrible nightmare.

As nothing could be done while the snow lasted, Gilbert returned to Kentucky for the winter, yet could think of nothing but his discovery. He had found a fortune, had even put his hands upon it, and knew it was his whenever he could stake off his claim and take possession. He spent his time in making a chart of the stream he had followed on which he set down every detail he could recall of the eastern bank, along which he had travelled.

Early the following spring he was back at his uncle's mine, waiting impatiently for the snow to melt and be carried away by the swollen streams.

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Finally, after a tedious delay, he set out with a small party of miners all eager to have a hand in locating the rich prospect.

“ Hell’s Cañon! ” exclaimed the foreman, as, skirting Cone Top Mountain, Gilbert pointed out the way. One of the men, a Mexican, declined to go any farther with the party, and the foreman explained to the wondering Gilbert:

“ The Mexicans give Hell’s Cañon a wide berth. They say that one of them found a big treasure there, and then lost it and his life in some uncanny way. They found his bones though, next summer. Knew ’em by his divining rod, that he clung to even in death.”

On the second day Gilbert and his companions found the stream, which fought its way among the upturned rocks, cavernous gorges and fallen logs.

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At the sight of it Gilbert eagerly led the search along the east bank, and every spot was carefully searched. But the boulder, the two dead trees — every other characteristic landmark on Gilbert's chart — could not be found. All search was vain. The map was not that of the locality they were in — as Gilbert himself was obliged to admit.

During that summer Gilbert led out four other searching parties, but never got any nearer the lost lead. Then he again went South for the winter. When he next returned it was with a flushed cheek that contrasted horribly with his pale, pinched look and steadily failing strength. In spite of all disappointments, he was still hopeful, and to humor him his uncle's miners occasionally made excursions into the maze of peaks and gulches.

One morning, late in the season, Gil-

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bert asked for one more chance to solve the mystery of Hell's Cañon. He had had a dream, he said enthusiastically, that this time he would be successful. The miners did not put much faith in dreams, but, for his uncle's sake, and because it was recalled that this was the second anniversary of the great discovery, they made up a party and started out in the usual direction. Although they moved slowly, the young man's feebleness increased until it became necessary to carry him on a litter made of boughs. This delayed them even more, and it was late on the third day before they reached the stream. At the sight of the dashing water, Gilbert's strength appeared to rally, and, sitting up, he directed them to cross to the west bank. At this strange order the bearers exchanged significant glances and called the rest of the party. They all believed that with a brief re-

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turn of physical strength the young man's mind had broken down. The one point on which he had always been most positive — that the vein was on the eastern bank of the stream — he had now abandoned. It was evident to them that the lost lead would never be found.

But it was time to camp for the night, and the west bank was much more sheltered. With much difficulty, bracing themselves against the stones, they carried the litter across the swift current. Selecting a site sheltered by a huge boulder, the men sent in advance to pitch camp began with picks to clear a spot for the tent. With a ring that could not be mistaken the steel struck the rock. The men gave a great cheer. Gilbert raised himself on his litter when it was brought up, and gazed excitedly at the great boulder and its surroundings, which had come

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to him so vividly in that prophetic death-dream — his last on earth.

“The Lost Lead!” he cried in a triumphant tone, and then adding in a weak voice, “Bury me here, boys,” he sank back — dead.

Spring freshets had changed the torrent's course, and the east bank had become the west!

They buried Louis Gilbert with the treasure he had never possessed, and while the rich mine became known in financial circles as “The Lost Lead,” yet old miners themselves speak of it only as “The Grave of Gold.”

**THE MYSTERY OF THE THIRTY
MILLIONS**

*The Mystery of the Thirty Millions*¹

AT eight o'clock on the morning of March 14, the Anglo-American liner, the *Oklahoma*, left her dock in North River on her regular trip to Southampton.

The fact of her departure, ordinarily of merely local interest, was telegraphed all over the United States and Canada, and even to London itself; for there was a significance attached to this particular trip such as had never before marked the sailing of an ocean steamship from these shores.

It was not because the great vessel numbered among her crowd of passengers a well-known English duke and his young bride, the grand-niece of a

¹ This story was written in collaboration with T. F. Anderson.

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world-famous New York railroad magnate, that her sailing was heralded by such a blowing of trumpets, nor because she also had upon her lists the names of the august British ambassador to the United States, returning home on a brief furlough, the noted French tragedian, fresh from his American triumphs, and a score of other illustrious personages whose names were household words in a dozen countries.

The presence of all these notables was merely incidental. What made this trip of the *Oklahoma* an event of international interest was the fact that at this, the apparent climax of the great gold exporting movement from the United States, now continued until it had almost drained the national treasury of its precious yellow hoard, and had precipitated a commercial crisis such as never before had been

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experienced, the *Oklahoma* was taking to the shores of insatiate John Bull the largest lump amount of gold ever shipped upon a single vessel within the memory of man.

Not even in the memorable gold exporting year of 1893 had any such sum as this been sent abroad at one time.

It was not the usual paltry half million or million dollars that she was carrying away in her great strong room of steel and teak wood, but thirty million dollars' worth of shining eagles and glinting bars, hastily called across the ocean because of the adverse "balance of trade" and the temporary mistrust of American securities by the fickle Europeans.

The mere insurance premium on this vast sum was in itself a comfortable fortune. Business men wondered why such a large amount was intrusted to

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one steamer. Suppose she should collide in the fog and sink, as one great ship had done only a few weeks before — what would become of the insurance companies then?

Suppose some daring Napoleon of crime should hatch a startling conspiracy to seize the steamer, intimidate the crew and passengers, and possess himself of the huge treasure? “It would be a stake well worth long risks,” thought some of the police officials, as they read the headlines in the evening papers.

The *Oklahoma* was a fast sailer. Her five hundred feet of length and her twelve thousand tons of displacement were made light work of by the great clanking, triple-expansion engines when their combined force of fifteen thousand horse power was brought to bear upon her twin screws. Under ordinary conditions she ought to have

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made port on the other side in time to let her passengers eat late dinner on the sixth day out. Incoming steamers reported a brief spell of nasty weather in mid-ocean, however, and so her failure to reach Southampton on the sixth and even the seventh day was not particularly remarked.

The great American public had been busy with other weighty matters in the interim, including a threatened secession of the silver-producing States; and the departure of this modern argosy with her precious freight had almost passed into history. For history in that year was anything that had happened farther than a week back — a day, if it was not of overwhelming importance.

If the big ship's arrival had been cabled on the eighth day, or even early on the ninth, it would still have found the public in a comparatively calm

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state of mind, for the mid-Atlantic storm would naturally account for a multitude of lost hours; but when the ninth lapped over onto the tenth and the tenth onto the eleventh and twelfth, with no tidings of the tardy steamer, surprise grew into anxiety and anxiety into an international sensation.

Of course all sorts of plausible theories were advanced by the steamship agents, the newspapers, and other oracles, including that of the inevitable broken shaft; and these might have sufficed for a day or two longer had it not been for another and much more startling theory that suddenly came to the surface and threw two continents into a fever of trepidation and suspense.

It was the following announcement in a leading New York morning paper that roused excitement to fever heat: "A new and most astounding phase

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has come over the case of the mysteriously missing *Oklahoma*. It has just been given out from police headquarters that 'Gentleman Jim' Langwood, the noted cracksman and forger, whose ten years' sentence at Sing Sing expired only a few weeks ago, was in the city several days previous to the sailing of the *Oklahoma* and went with her as a passenger, under an assumed name. Even at that very time the central office detectives were looking for him, as a tip had been sent around that he was up to some new deviltry. One of those clever people whom nothing ever escapes had seen him go aboard almost at the last minute, and gave an accurate description of his personal appearance, which was evidently but slightly disguised.

"Langwood is probably the only criminal in the country who would ever conceive and try to execute such a stu-

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pendous undertaking, and it is something more than a suspicion on the part of the New York police that he has smuggled on board a couple of dozen well-armed desperadoes, who could easily hold the entire crew and passengers in check and make them do their bidding, for a time, at least. The idea is so replete with thrilling possibilities that the entire community stands aghast at it."

It is to be noted that the public always "stands aghast" in such a case as this; but it is more to the point just now to say that the article went on, through a column or more, to describe in minute detail the circumstances attendant upon the departure of "Gentleman Jim" even to the number and shape of the bundles he had in his arms. The famous robber was very boyish in appearance, and one of the last persons in the world whom a chance acquaint-

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ance would think of looking up in the rogues' gallery. Evidently he was "out for the stuff," in most approved stage villain style, with more millions in the stake than even Colonel Sellers, of nineteenth century fame, had ever dreamed of. Of course this theory, which was already accepted as a fact, especially in police and newspaper circles, was quickly cabled across, and created such a profound sensation on the other side that even the London papers had to give it that prominent position which is usually reserved for American cyclones, crop failures, and labor outbreaks.

Upon the phlegmatic British government it acted much like an electric shock and nearly threw the foreign office into a panic; for was not the British minister plenipotentiary himself a passenger on the ill-fated *Oklahoma*, and possibly at that very hour being

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butchered in cold blood by a lot of Yankee cut-throats?

The thought was too horrible for a moment's endurance, and forthwith the cablegrams began to flash thick and fast between the foreign office and the British legation at Washington.

The result was that, within a few hours after the appearance of the paragraph, one of the fastest and most powerful of her majesty's cruisers, quickly followed by a second and a third, hastily steamed from Portsmouth Roads, the three spreading out north, west, and south, like a great marine fan, as they hurried to the rescue of the *Oklahoma* and the British ambassador.

Meanwhile, at the Boston, Brooklyn, and League Island navy yards three or four of Uncle Sam's white war dogs were getting up steam for a similar errand, and a small fleet of ocean-going

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steamers, specially chartered by New York, Boston, and Chicago newspapers to go in search of the absent leviathan, were already threading their way through the Narrows.

Not for years had there been such world-wide interest in an ocean expedition. The newspapers commanded an unheard of sale, for everybody was on the tiptoe of expectation concerning the fate of the missing steamer, her six hundred passengers and her thirty millions of gold.

While the public was thus feverishly awaiting the news, certain discoveries were being made by the New York police, which only went to confirm their previous suspicions. Four or five other hardened graduates from state prison were found to be absent from their accustomed haunts in the East Side slums, although known to have been in the city just before the *Oklahoma*

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sailed, as was "Gentleman Jim," himself.

These discoveries had their natural effect upon the public mind, and the friends of those on board the steamer began to despair of hearing that even human life had been respected by the piratical band.

As to the British foreign office, this cumulative evidence threw it into a perfect frenzy, and it was only by a miracle that a declaration of war against the United States was averted.

Three days passed by after the departure of the big searching fleets, during which time all incoming steamers reported that they had not found a single trace of the *Oklahoma* either in the northern or southern route. Vessels from the Mediterranean, the West Indies, South America, all made the same ominous report.

The tension was terrible. Thousands

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could not even sleep on account of the mental strain, and the minds of some of the weaker actually gave way beneath it. The public by this time was convinced beyond a reasonable shadow of doubt that the robbers had successfully carried out their fiendish plan; but how? and when? and where?

When they opened their newspapers on the morning of the eighteenth day of suspense, they found the answer to the question, and the greatest marine mystery of centuries was solved.

In the small hours of the night there had flashed across the European continent, and under the dark waters of the Atlantic, this startling message from the representative of the *Union Press Association*:—

“Lisbon, April 1, — The missing *Oklahoma* is disabled at Fayal, Azores, where she was discovered by the *Union Press* special expedition. Many of the

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half-starved crew and passengers are on the verge of insanity. The officers tell a most astounding story of the steamer's exciting and almost fatal adventures. On the third night out, the *Oklahoma* suddenly came under some mysterious but irresistible influence by which she was carried rapidly out of her course towards the south. Every effort was made by the officers to bring the ship back to her course, but the big liner seemed drifting helplessly at the mercy of some powerful current. The compasses were useless, and the wheel no longer exercised the slightest control over the steamer's movements.

“ Naturally the anxiety of the officers was in no way diminished when on the morning of the next day, which was then the fourth day out, another vessel, — a long low-setting craft of shining steel, — was discovered off the *Okla-*

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homa's starboard bow, about a mile ahead, but moving in the same direction. By careful observations it was discovered that the course of the two steamers was identical. Both were apparently under the same mysterious influence. Instead of sighting a rescuer, the *Oklahoma* had, so it seemed, only discovered another victim of the irresistible current!

“ Time and again the *Oklahoma* attempted to signal the companion ship, but the latter made no reply. Close observation revealed that she was built on the whaleback principle, with nothing above decks save ventilators and signal mast, — but failed to discover any sign of human beings.

“ By afternoon their continued failure to bring the liner back to her course had so wrought upon the minds of her officers that their anxiety infected the spirits of the passengers, who were

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now aroused to the real danger that menaced them.

“ When the fifth day dawned, with the *Oklahoma* hundreds of miles out of the regular transatlantic course, the gravity of the situation could no longer be concealed. Distress signals were kept flying, and all possible steam was put on with the idea of overhauling the companion ship and giving or receiving aid. To the amazement of both officers and passengers, however, in spite of every effort, the *Oklahoma* failed to gain a single inch on the other vessel. Before they had time to attempt an explanation of this remarkable fact, amazement gave way to consternation. For just a moment a third vessel had appeared on the horizon like a messenger of hope; but no sooner had she been sighted than with the swiftness of lightning the mysterious companion craft turned half around

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and darted away to the southeast, with the *Oklahoma* following as helplessly as though she were in tow.

“In that moment the awful truth was revealed. The steel vessel was nothing more nor less than a floating loadstone, which by some mysterious power was dragging the great ocean monster hither and thither as easily as a magnet draws a toy ship from one side to the other of a mimic pond!

“Who was she, and what was her motive? Almost before those on board had asked the question, the answer flashed upon them. The thirty millions of gold! Beyond a doubt, it was their capture which she was planning to accomplish, either by luring the *Oklahoma* from the regular path of ocean travel, and looting her and her passengers at leisure, or by compelling her to run aground upon some remote rock or shoal.

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“ With this revelation a new horror unveiled itself. Equipped as they were only with the supplies for a short trip across the Atlantic, the overwrought minds of many saw starvation looming up before them. That night not a soul sought his berth. From time to time consultations were held between the chief officers, and many-colored rockets spit and blazed their signals of distress incessantly across the sky.

“ At length, soon after dawn of the sixth day, orders were given to bank fires and hoist sail in the hope that the *Oklahoma* as a sailing vessel might free herself from the awful influence that chained her.

“ But the effort was vain. Wind and sail proved as useless as wheel and compass against the fatal power of that mysterious craft which drew the *Oklahoma* after her as irresistibly as though

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the two vessels were united by an unseen hawser.

“The steamer had now become a scene of indescribable horror. Meal-time, bedtime,—all the customary routine was disorganized; and daily prayer meetings were conducted among the more emotional of the passengers.

“Finally, seven days after she had left New York, the officers of the big liner united in one last desperate effort to offset the magnetic influence of the mysterious ‘pirate.’ The fires were revived in the engine room, the steam pressure in all the boilers was run up to the ‘blowing off’ point; then, suddenly, the reversing mechanism was applied and a shudder ran through the great floating city as the twin screws began to back water.

“For a few minutes there ensued a titanic tug of war such as the beholders

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had never before witnessed. The water astern was lashed into a lather of foam, and for a brief moment the triumph of steam over magnetism seemed assured.

“ Only for a moment, however, for the cheer that had ascended from the anxious scores on the deck of the *Oklahoma* when she slowly began to back had scarcely died away when with a mighty crash a vital section of the over-taxed engines gave way, followed by a hoarse yell of consternation from the excited engineers and stokers — and both screws were helpless and still.

“ With this failure hope was well-nigh extinguished; and the *Oklahoma*, with her precious freight and her six hundred and forty-three human souls, abandoned all active effort to escape. With not a sail of any kind in sight, she passively rolled and plunged southward for seven days after her strange and terrible pilot, from which, to add

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to the horror of the situation, no human sign had yet been given. The supply of rockets was now exhausted, and food was doled out in minute portions as to members of a shipwrecked crew in order to husband supplies.

“ On the afternoon of the fourteenth day, when the exhausted passengers had reached the verge of distraction, a gleam of hope appeared on the horizon in the shape of a solitary steamer, bearing down from the southwest. A glance through the telescope proved her to be a fast and formidable British cruiser, evidently en route from South America to England.

“ At this news a mighty shudder, half of hope, half of fear, seized the crowd assembled upon the deck. Would the British cruiser come to their assistance, and if so, would she, too, become a victim of the magnetic craft?

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For a moment their fate hung in the balance; then from three hundred throats rang out a hoarse cry of joy as the mysterious craft swerved, turned sharply and shot away over the surface of the Atlantic due north.

“The spell was broken. The big liner with her six hundred human souls and thirty millions in gold was freed from the power that had for so long held her captive. But crippled as she was by the accident to her machinery she was unable to proceed unaided, and was taken in tow by the British steamer, the *Midlothian*, and a day later was brought safely into port at Fayal.

“The *Union Press* steamer is the first to bring the thrilling news. The first officer of the *Oklahoma* and the saloon passengers, including Sir Gambrel Roufe, the British ambassador, accompanied your correspondent to Lis-

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bon. A relief steamer is urgently needed, as the *Oklahoma's* engines are both disabled, and she will not be able to proceed for several weeks.

“ The passenger thought to be ‘ Gentleman Jim ’ Langwood, proves to be the Duke of Medfordshire, now on his wedding trip with his young millionaire American bride.”

Hardly had the excitement caused by this startling intelligence subsided, when it was once more aroused by a despatch from Providence, R. I., announcing the capture in the act of robbing a jewelry store of “ Gentleman Jim ” Langwood, and a gang of four other oldtimers, and by the following even more important cablegram from the Russian representative of the *Union Press*:—

“ St. Petersburg, April 2.—The identity of the mysterious craft by which the *Oklahoma* was drawn from her

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course has been established beyond a doubt. The vessel is a Hypnotic Cruiser, recently completed by a Russian inventor, named Slobodenski, and possessed of an electric apparatus by which any vessel can be brought completely under its control.

“Whether the Hypnotic Cruiser’s bedevilment of the *Oklahoma* was merely a trial of power, or whether plunder was intended, can only be surmised. But naval lawyers say that this marvelous new invention will revolutionize naval warfare and necessitate the passage of stringent laws to cover a crime for which at present no penalty exists.”

ASLEEP AT LONE MOUNTAIN

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IT occurred nearly fourteen years ago, yet I never enter a sleeping-car without being confronted by that innocent face. It clings to me all the more because I have always looked upon partings and leave-takings as mile-posts of sorrow in the journeys of life. I dislike good-bys. I hate farewells.

I had just returned from Australia and was about to start on my journey across the continent. In company with two old friends who had crossed the ferry from San Francisco to Oakland to see me off, I sat chatting in my sleeper, when two Sisters of Mercy hurriedly entered the car.

Just what it was in the appearance

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of the newcomers that arrested the attention of the earlier arrivals — whether it was their humble yet characteristic attire, so suggestive of charity the whole world over, the apparent anxiety betrayed by their manner, or the fact that a sleeping child, clasped tenderly in the arms of one, was their sole companion—whether it was any or all of these things that caused a sudden reign of respectful silence in the car, I am unable to say. Certain it is, however, that their coming was not unnoticed; neither was the circumstance that the only visible baggage of the trio consisted of a small square bundle neatly done up in a gray shawl.

Upon being shown to seats in the section directly opposite the one occupied by myself and friends, they at once entered into earnest conversation with the sleeping-car conductor. At the first few whispered words the

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man's manner showed unmistakable surprise. He appeared either unable or unwilling to comply with some request they had made. Although the nature of the request was not apparent, the occupants of neighboring seats could not fail to note from the conversation, which now and then became quite audible, that it bore some important relation to the sleeping member of the party. The evident fact that the sisters felt much concerned respecting the safety and welfare of their youthful companion served only to increase the mystery of the situation.

After patiently listening for some minutes to appeals first from one and then the other, and after glancing over a railroad ticket and letter they had handed him, the conductor consented to meet their wishes, declining, however, to accept a sum of money they repeatedly tendered him. Before leaving

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them the man spoke a few words of reassurance and encouragement, which were cut short by the shrill whistle of the locomotive, announcing the train's departure. The sisters arose instantly, hastily expressed their earnest thanks to the conductor, and then, sinking upon their knees before the child, which had been aroused from its slumbers and sat innocently gazing about, first one and then the other clasped the infant in fond embrace, and, amid sobs and kisses, showered upon the little being the most fervent blessings and tender farewells. Then, covering their tearful faces with their hands, they arose, still weeping as though their hearts would break, and hurriedly left the car, which was already moving slowly out of the station.

No sooner had they gone than all eyes were directed towards the diminutive stranger who had caused the

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scene just witnessed. Too young to realize what was going on, he sat motionless, as though spellbound by fear or astonishment at his strange surroundings. In an instant the child became an object of intense curiosity. More than that, its extreme youth and utter helplessness aroused, on the part of its fellow-travelers, feelings of genuine sympathy and pity — feelings which the heroic silence maintained by the little innocent, in spite of the now swiftly moving train, only served to intensify.

Neither memory nor imagination can suggest to me a more touching picture than the one presented by that plainly clad handful of human loneliness, as it sat there in meek silence, its tiny hand timidly resting on the little bundle by its side, while its eyes remained intently fixed on the door which, a few moments before, had closed upon its

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late companions. Whose child was this? Who was to care for it? What was to become of it? Was one of the nuns a relative? Was the younger, perhaps, its sister? Or was either neither? These and similar questions could be easily read on the countenances of the wondering passengers.

Some minutes elapsed before the conductor again made his appearance, when he was at once besieged with questions concerning the mysterious stranger. And, as if determined that not a word should escape their ears, each of the twelve or fifteen occupants of the car crowded about him as he seated himself beside the lonely child.

The story they heard was brief and pathetic. The little boy was as much of a stranger to the conductor as he was to the passengers. His mother was dead. His home was in one of the

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smaller manufacturing towns of New England, where his father, who was to meet him on the arrival of our train at Omaha, lived in humble circumstances. The conductor had promised the sisters to protect and care for the child during the five days' journey. It was, however, not the little fellow's first trip across the plains, as nearly a year and a half ago, when but a few weeks old he had come to California with his invalid mother. The latter had survived the long journey but a very short time, and died among strangers in one of the foot-hill towns near San Francisco. The Sisters of Mercy of that city had by correspondence arranged with the father to adopt, or, rather, to provide a temporary home for the little waif, until he should be old enough to make the long return journey. And now, although the boy had reached but the tender age of eighteen months, the dis-

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tant parent, craving for his presence, had begged the sister to enlist in his behalf the sympathies and care of some kind-hearted East-bound passenger or railway employee. Their repeated efforts in the former direction having failed, they had at last applied to the conductor.

In relating the child's sad history, the sisters had, the conductor continued, so feelingly solicited his kindly offices and paid such glowing tribute to the almost angelic disposition and exceptional bravery of the infant that, however disinclined he had been to assume the responsibility, a persistent refusal of their unusual request seemed almost inhuman. He had therefore undertaken the strange charge, and trusted, he said, that the passengers would in nowise be inconvenienced thereby. From that moment on, every one who had less than half an hour

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before witnessed the scene of sorrowful parting, which had so touchingly told how completely the little fellow had walked into the hearts of his benefactors, — from that time on, every one felt a personal responsibility for the comfort and safety of the boy. Introduced under circumstances that rendered him a hero at the outset, at the end of the first day he had already become the pet of the passengers and the object of their kindest attentions.

While the claim that this child was remarkable for beauty and cleverness might lend sentiment and romance to my simple narrative, the fact is that he was neither handsome nor bright. In appearance he was simply a plain, plump, red-cheeked, flaxen-haired baby boy, with apparently little to be proud of, save his evident good health and a pair of large blue eyes that seemed frankness itself. His accomplishments

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were few, indeed. He was still, as the sisters had said, learning to walk. His vocabulary included but three or four imperfectly spoken words, and he was conspicuously deficient in that parrot-like precociousness so common and frequently so highly prized in little children. But what our youthful companion lacked in attractive outwardness was more than made up by the true inwardness of one accomplishment he did possess. That was silence. This virtue he practised to a degree that soon won for him the admiration and affection of all. Though exhibiting no sign of embarrassment at the friendly advances of the passengers, and while not unmoved by their tender attentions, he maintained through that long journey a humble air of mute contentment that lost its balance on but three occasions.

His quiet ways were a theme of con-

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stant comment, while his presence proved not only a source of increasing pleasure to our small band of tourists, but did much to relieve the monotony of the tedious journey.

One important detail in the boy's eventful history was missing. Cared for by strangers from earliest infancy, deprived of his mother's love and father's care, he had thus far not even received that all-important parental gift, — a Christian name. To the sisters he had been known simply as "Baby." By that infantile appellation he had passed from their gentle mercies to the conductor's care. And only as "Baby homeward bound" was he spoken of in their letter addressed to his father.

Before he had spent a day among us it was suggested that his exemplary conduct entitled him to a more dignified name — at least during the period of

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our companionship. And this suggestion led to one of many amusing incidents. By what name should the boy be known? After the question had been eagerly answered a dozen times in as many different ways, with apparently little hope of a unanimous choice — for every one felt that his or her preference was peculiarly appropriate — a quiet old man, whose appearance was strongly suggestive of the pioneer days, offered a happy solution of the difficulty. He proposed that, in view of the humble circumstances of the child, the privilege of naming him for the trip be sold at auction among the passengers of our car, adding, by way of explanation, that the sum thus realized might “give the little fellow a start in life.”

The average overland tourist is never slow to adopt any expedient to relieve the tedium of the journey; and

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here was, as one chap expressed it, "A chance for an auction on wheels, and one for charity's sake, at that." So the proposition was no sooner stated than acted upon. The auctioneer found himself unanimously elected, and, placing himself in the center of the car, heard the bidding, prompted by every generous impulse that enthusiasm and sympathy can give, rise rapidly in sums of one, two, and three dollars until thirty-five was called. There it halted, but only for a moment. The situation had become exciting. The auctioneer himself now took a hand in the competition; and a round of applause greeted his bid, made in the name of his native State, "Ohio bids fifty dollars." It was regarded as a matter of course that this sum would secure the coveted privilege. But no! Some one remarks that yet another county remains to be heard from. The voice of the weather-worn

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pioneer, — the suggester of the scheme, — has not yet been heard in the bidding. He has been a silent looker-on, biding his time. Now it has come. As he rises slowly in his seat he is intently watched by every eye, for somehow the impression prevails that he hails from “the coast,” and that consequently there can be nothing small in anything he does. In this no one is disappointed. The heart and purse of the gray-haired veteran are in the cause. Besides, his “pride is up” for the State he worships, almost idolizes. As his clear voice rings out with: “California sees Ohio’s fifty, and goes fifty better,” he is greeted by a storm of cheers that he will remember as long as he lives. And when the auctioneer announces: “California pays one hundred dollars and secures the privilege of naming the boy; what name shall it be?” the answer comes back quick as a flash:

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“Grit! That sounds well and seems to fit well.”

The passengers thought so, too, and very plainly showed their approval by overwhelming the man with congratulations and good wishes.

Reports of our proceedings were not slow in reaching the passengers in other parts of the train, whose curiosity or compassion led to numerous daily visits, while thoughtful sympathy found expression in liberal gifts of fruit, photographs, and a variety of Indian toys, as curious as they were welcome. To the old Californian, whose great liberality had secured for him a place in the respect and good-will of the entire party which was second only to that held by Grit himself, these continued attentions proved a source of special delight. Though he bore his honors with becoming modesty, he found early opportunity of proposing

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the health of the boy, who, as he aptly expressed it, "had been rocked in the cradle of misfortune, but had at last struck the color." Equally happy was his reply to a party of jolly cowboys, whom curiosity had led to solicit "a peep at the silent kid," while the train was delayed at one of the eating stations along the road. Their request having been granted, one of their number felt so highly elated upon receiving a handshake from Grit that he insisted upon presenting him with his huge cowboy spurs as a keepsake, proclaiming as he did so — with a trifle more enthusiasm than reverence — that in "paying a hundred to nominate the cute little kid, 'old California' carved his own name upon the Rock of Ages."

"Bless his little heart," replied the grizzled miner; "I'd give ten thousand more to own him, now that he has won his spurs."

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Among the recollections of my personal experiences with Grit, the second night of the journey stands out with especial clearness. At that time we were passing through the famous snow-shed section on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada, our train running at a high rate of speed in order to make up lost time. It was here that the bravery of our little hero was put to a cruel test. Some time after midnight I was awakened by a child's frantic screams, that rose loud above the train's thundering noise. And, though up to this time there had not been a single tearful outbreak on the part of the young Trojan, there could be no mistaking the source of the piercing shrieks that now met my ears. I lost no time in hastening to his assistance, for I knew that, by way of experiment, he had been quartered in a "section" entirely by himself, the previous night having been

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a sleepless one to both the conductor and his charge. Furthermore, it was evident from his agonizing cries that I was the first to hear him. Finding the car in total darkness, the lights on both ends having gone out, I met with some delay in feeling my way to the terrified child, calling to him as I went; and at the first touch of my hand the trembling, feverish little form drew close to me, its chubby arms closed wildly about my neck, while loud, hysterical sobs told more plainly than words can express the agony that the child had endured. Only one who is familiar with sleeping-car travel over mountainous country, who has found himself suddenly aroused by the terrific roaring and swaying of a swiftly running train, and who, unconscious for the instant of his surroundings, has felt his flesh creep and his heart stand still, as he imagined himself engulfed by a mighty

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torrent or hurled over some awful precipice, only such an one can realize the position of this terror-stricken child.

Arousing the porter, who had gone to sleep while blacking the passengers' boots, I carried Grit to my own berth, where my endeavors to soothe his disturbed feelings proved so highly successful that the re-lighting of the car was greeted by him with loud laughter, through the still lingering tears. But go to sleep again he would not. No matter how often I tucked him beneath the blankets and settled myself to pretended slumbers, he would as often extricate himself, and, in a sitting posture, silently contemplate his surroundings. Fearing to doze off under the circumstances, I finally concluded to sit up with the little fellow until sleep should overcome him. Making his way to my side as I sat on the edge of the berth, and placing his face close to

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mine, he imparted the cause of his persistent wakefulness by a gently uttered "dwink!" — repeating the word with more emphasis after a moment's pause. Happily, ample provisions had been made to meet his wants in this direction, and, procuring from the porter's "baby's bakery," as the well-provided lunch basket we had presented him at Sacramento had come to be known, I helped him to a glass of milk, after drinking which he fell quickly to sleep.

After that night's experience, Grit singled me out as his particular friend; and, as a consequence, he was nightly permitted to share my section with me. In these closer relations I found him the gentlest, most loving, and best-behaved child I ever met. It seemed as though he knew and felt that he stood sadly alone in the world, and that the less trouble he gave to others the better he would get on. His spirit of con-

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tentment and faculty of self-entertainment were phenomenal. While cards, books, conversation, and sleep served as a means of passing away time among the other passengers, he would for hours at a time remain in sole possession of a favorite corner seat, silently musing over some simple Indian toy. Again, an illustrated time-table or railway map would absorb his entire attention, until he had apparently mastered every detail of the intricate document. To watch the little toddling figure, after these prolonged periods of self-amusement, as, clad in a long, loose, gray gown, it quietly made its way along the car on a tour of inspection, proved an appealing study. Finding his arrival at my seat unnoticed at times — by reason of my absorption in a book or game of cards — he would announce his presence by a series of steady pulls at my coat, and make known his wants by a

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sweetly mumbled "Mum-mum." Repeated falls, incurred during these excursions, never caused him to falter in his purpose, nor did these, at any time, result in any other than good-natured demonstrations.

On but one occasion, aside from that already alluded to, was he moved to tears — an unlucky incident that happened while our party was taking breakfast at Cheyenne, sadly upsetting the remarkable tranquillity of his mind. We had scarcely seated ourselves at the table, with the boy, as usual, perched in a baby chair in the midst of the party, when, espying an orange that a little girl next to him had placed beside her plate, Grit, innocently unmindful of its ownership, proceeded to help himself to the inviting fruit. No sooner had he grasped it than a sharp slap from his fair neighbor's hand sent it rolling along the floor. The child started,

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trembled; keenly hurt in more ways than one by what was, no doubt, the first punishment he had ever received, he burst into heart-rending tears.

Turning to me with outstretched arms, his piteously spoken "Mum-mum" cast a shadow over the festive occasion, and to some of us, at least, placed the further discussion of the meal beyond desire. Taking him back to the car, we were quickly joined by the conductor and our friend from the coast, who, after denouncing the "outrage" with frontier fluency, insisted that he should demand an apology from the offender, who was "plenty old enough to know better," and whose indignity to Grit, "right before a lot of strangers, was nothing short of an insult to our entire party." He "would rather," he continued, "fast a whole month" than sit by and again witness such conduct from one whose "sex and

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insignificance prevented a man from even drawing his gun in defence of the most helpless and innocent little creature on earth."

Something in the old man's manner, as he uttered these words, left little doubt in the minds of the passengers, now returning from the hurriedly finished meal, that, had Grit's tormentor been unfortunate enough to belong to the sterner sex, the novel experience of serving on a coroner's jury in the cowboy country would doubtless have been afforded us. This tension of feeling was happily relieved, however, by the appearance of the offender in person, who, accompanied by her mother, tearfully presented, not only her humble apology, but that bone of contention, the tropical product itself, which she insisted should be accepted as a peace offering.

As the journey progressed, each day

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brought to our party frequent reminders of their constantly increasing attachment, not only for the little hero, but for each other. And it became more and more apparent, now that the Rockies had already been left behind, and our thoughts turned to the inevitable breaking up of the happy band, that Grit's presence had been the unconscious means of forming among his companions a strong bond of friendship and good-fellowship — one that could not be severed without sincere mutual regrets.

The morning of the last day found us still speeding over the seemingly endless cattle plains, where the frequent spectacle of immense grazing herds, guarded by picturesque bands of frolicking cowboys, added novelty and interest to the monotony of the scene.

It was in the early part of the afternoon of that day, while Grit was en-

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joying his customary mid-day nap, and the final games of whist and euchre so completely enlisted our interest as to render unnoticed the locomotive's shrill notes of warning to trespassing cattle, that a sudden terrific crash, followed by violent jolting and swaying of the car, breaking of windows, and pitching about of passengers and baggage, caused a scene of consternation and suffering.

Mingled with shouts of "Collision!" from men, and the screams of panic-stricken women, came the engineer's piercing signal for "Down brakes!" and before the car had fairly regained its balance upon the rails and the occupants had time to extricate themselves or realize what had happened, the train had come to a standstill.

More frightened than hurt, people instantly began bolting frantically for the doors, questioning and shouting to one

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another as they went. In the midst of the wild confusion arose cries of "Save Grit! Look out for the baby!" The words sent a shock to the heart of every hearer. Fear vanished. Personal peril was forgotten for the moment. Not a soul left the car! Though women had fainted and men lay motionless as if paralyzed, but one thought filled the minds of those who had heard the appeal: Was Grit safe?

In a moment the answer to this unasked question fell from the lips of one whose intense affection for the boy he had so appropriately named needed no appeal to carry him to his side in time of peril. "The child is hurt! Somebody go and see if there is a doctor on the train!" In willing response, several men rushed out among the excited throng that poured from the other cars.

Before us, on a pillowed seat, to

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which he had just borne him, lay Grit, half unconscious, pale, limp, and breathing with painful difficulty. The sudden shock which had almost overturned the car had rudely thrown him from his bed to the floor. There, between two unoccupied seats on the opposite side of the car, we had found him, convulsively gasping for breath, one little hand still grasping tightly the Indian doll-baby that for days had been his cherished companion. Though an examination of his body revealed no marks of violence, he was evidently in great pain. Applying such restoratives as were at hand, we gradually revived consciousness. Every attempt, however, to lift him or change his reclining position visibly increased his suffering.

Word soon came back that no physician could be found, that the accident was caused by the train coming into collision with a band of stray cattle.

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So far as could be hastily ascertained, one man had been fatally injured, while many persons had sustained serious bruises and strains. From the train conductor it was further learned that neither the locomotive nor any of the cars had been sufficiently damaged to prevent our proceeding to Omaha — still some five or six hours distant.

After a brief stop for the purpose of a careful examination of all parts of the train, we were again under way; the engineer having orders, in view of the injured passengers, to make the run in the fastest time possible.

The remainder of the journey was, even to the most fortunate, associated with sadness. But whatever the suffering on that ill-fated train, memory carries me back to but one sorrowful scene, — the bedside about which lingered the friends of the little stranger whom we

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had learned to love so well. In the presence of his suffering our own lesser injuries were forgotten, and all efforts were bent upon securing for the little sufferer every comfort possible under the adverse circumstances. With a view to lessening the painful effect of the constant jarring and shaking motion, a swinging bed was speedily improvised in the middle of the car, and here, surrounded by his sorrowing companions, lay Grit, enduring in silence the pains that his pale, sadly troubled face so keenly expressed.

Late in the evening the train reached its destination, without further mishap.

It had not yet come to a standstill in the station when, accompanied by the sleeping-car conductor, the father of Grit entered the car. Early in the day it had been resolved by the passengers that three of their number should meet the father upon his arrival, for the pur-

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pose of exonerating the conductor from any carelessness, and also for offering their assistance in caring for the child during the night. Now, however, reminded of their former happy anticipation of the meeting between parent and child, a shudder of sadness caused them irresistibly to shrink from a scene of welcome more deeply sad, even, than that sorrowful parting which they had witnessed on entering upon their journey a few days before.

As the stranger, deeply agitated, anxiously made his way to the central group, however, earnest sympathy found ready expression; and ere his eye had met the object of its search a friendly voice checked and bade him be calm and hopeful. "Your child, sir," continued the speaker reassuringly, "has not entirely recovered from the rough shaking-up we got a little while ago. He had a lucky escape, but now

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needs rest and quiet, and — you and I had perhaps better go for a doctor, while our friends here convey the boy to the hotel, where we shall join them shortly.” And as the uneasy parent bends over the little bed and with inquiring look seeks from the calm blue eyes some token of recognition or sign of hope, the voice, more urgent — as though suddenly stirred by memories of an eventful past — again breaks in: “Let us lose no time in making the child more comfortable.”

A few moments later Grit’s friends stood around his bed at the neighboring hotel, listening to the verdict of the physician hastily summoned by the big-hearted pioneer. Internal injury of an extent unknown, but whose nature would probably develop before morning, was the verdict given after a careful examination. Alleviating measures, however, were suggested, which the dis-

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tracted father hastened to put into effect. It was during one of his absences from the room that the big-hearted pioneer, drawing the doctor to one side, appealed to him in faltering tones to save the child "at any sacrifice or any cost."

But the appeal, though touching, was unnecessary. Higher considerations than those of personal gain prompted the kind doctor to exercise his utmost skill. After his first visit not an hour passed but what his footsteps brought to the watchers reassuring proof of his deep interest in the case. And finally, yielding apparently to the soothing remedies, Grit fell into slumber that brought encouragement to his friends, none of whom could be induced, however, to forsake his bedside.

During the vigils of the night the father was repeatedly moved to speak of the sorrows of his life; of the sud-

Asleep at Lone Mountain

den, fatal illness of his loving young wife; and of her ardent assurance that her last thoughts were solely of himself "and baby," coupled with the fervent wish that the two might "some day find a home in California, where in their final rest all three might once again be side by side."

Towards morning the boy grew suddenly restive, and violent coughing spells brought back the condition of semi-unconsciousness of the previous day. The doctor, evidently expecting a crisis, now remained constantly at his side.

The change came at last.

Just after dawn a beam of light broke softly over the little face, and new hope came to the anxious watchers. But, mistaking the silent messenger's approach for the herald of returning health, they had hoped in vain. The peaceful smile lingered but a mo-

Asleep at Lone Mountain

ment, then returned once again, as though the beckoning spirit

“ Was loth to quit its hold,”

and Grit had fallen asleep.

As a token of affection for her child, and in compliance with the dying mother's wish, the friends of Grit secured for the husband and father — chiefly through the generosity of one whose deeds shall outlive the recollection of his name — a permanent home in California; while the boy sleeps by her side, where the peaceful silence he so sweetly symbolized is never broken save by the weird lullaby of the waves that gently rise and fall over the distant shadows of Lone Mountain.

THE END.

From
L. C. Page & Company's
Announcement List
of New Fiction

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By L. M. MONTGOMERY.

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To quote from one of our editor's reports on the new Montgomery book — "Miss Montgomery has decidedly *arrived* in this story!" The remarkable success of her delightful ANNE books and of the charming "Kilmeny of the Orchard" has established her as one of America's leading authors — a writer of books which touch the heart, uplift the spirit, and leave an imprint of lasting sweetness on the memory. But in "The Story Girl," everywhere the touch of the *finished* artist is evident — a smoothness and polish which heightens the unusual style of a gifted author.

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Of Miss Montgomery's previous books, the reviewers have written as follows:

"The art which pervades every page is so refined that the cultivated imagination will return to the story again and again in memory to find always something fresh to enjoy." — *Toronto World*.

"Miss Montgomery has attained an honored place among the worth-while writers of fiction." — *Beacon and Budget*.

"Miss Montgomery has a sympathetic knowledge of human nature, joined to high ideals, a reasonably romantic view point and a distinct gift of description." — *Chicago Record-Herald*.

A CAPTAIN OF RALEIGH'S

By G. E. THEODORE ROBERTS, author of "A Cavalier of Virginia," "Comrades of the Trails," "Red Feathers," etc.

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A typical Roberts romance — dashing and brisk with the scenes for the most part laid in the infant colony of Newfoundland, at the time when Sir Walter Raleigh and other famous captains swept the seas for England. Sir Walter is one of the characters in the romance but the chief interest centres about one of his officers, Captain John Percy.

Elizabeth Duwaney, the heroine, is beautiful and vivacious enough to quite turn the heads of the several gallant gentlemen who struggle for her hand, and to keep the reader guessing until the very last page as to which suitor will find favor in her eyes. Unusual and unexpected situations in the plot are handled skillfully and you close the book agreeing with our editor that "Mr. Roberts has given us another capital yarn!"

"Mr. Roberts has undoubted skill in portraying character and carrying events along to a satisfactory conclusion." — *The Smart Set*.

"One can always predict of a book by Mr. Roberts that it will be interesting. One can go further and predict that the book will be fascinating, exciting and thrilling." — *Boston Globe*.

A SOLDIER OF VALLEY FORGE

By ROBERT NEILSON STEPHENS, author of "An Enemy to the King," "Philip Winwood," etc., and G. E. THEODORE ROBERTS, author of "Hemming, the Adventurer," "Red Feathers," etc.

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The many admirers of the brilliant historical romances of the late Robert Neilson Stephens will be gratified at the announcement of a posthumous work by that gifted writer. The rough draft of the story was laid aside for other work, and later, without completing the novel, the plot was utilized for a play. With the play completed Mr. Stephens again turned his attention to the novel, but death prevented its completion. Mr. Roberts has handled his difficult task of completing the work with care and skill.

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